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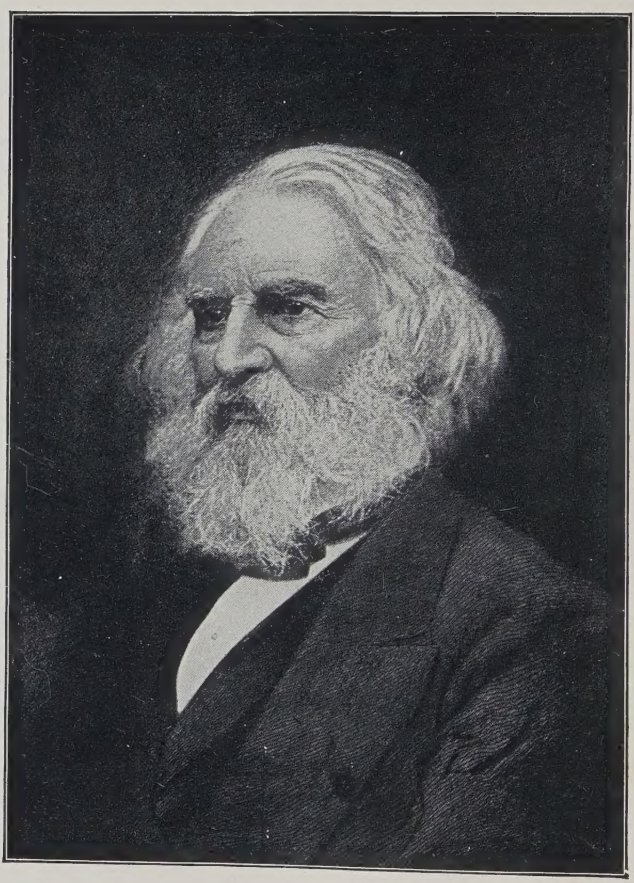

Henry W. Longfellow

The Riverside Literature Series

EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
BY EVA MARCH TAPPAN
AND INTRODUCTIONS AND STUDY HELPS
BY MARGARET ASHMUN

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · DALLAS
SAN FRANCISCO
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U . S . A

CONTENTS

A Sketch of Longfellow's Life. *By Eva March Tappan* 1

The History of Longfellow's Evangeline . . 19

The Meter of Evangeline 22

Historical Introduction 24

Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie 27

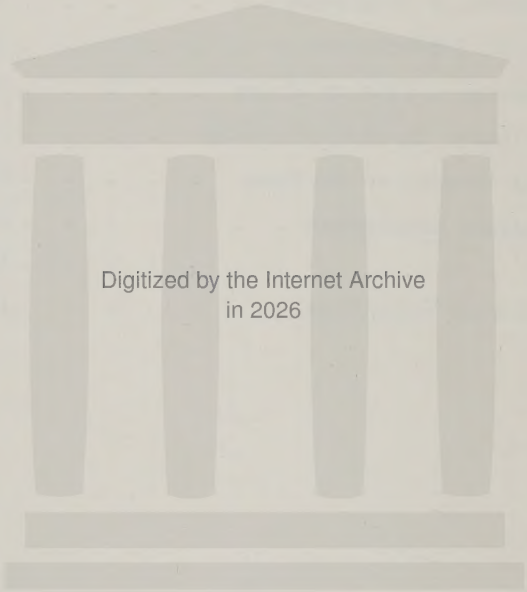
Study Helps. *By Margaret Ashmun* 98

A Brief Outline of the Poem 107

Composition Assignments 109

Notes 112

Pronouncing Vocabulary 118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A SKETCH OF LONGFELLOW'S LIFE

BY

EVA MARCH TAPPAN

Of the thousands of people who pass through Portland, Maine, in the summer season, there are few who do not visit a certain brick house on Congress Street. It is in the very heart of the city, a hotel on one side, a store on the other, electric cars by the score passing it every hour. The old house is somewhat withdrawn from the bustle of the street and stands with a quiet dignity, as if it realized that it had been the early home of Longfellow. The poet was born February 27, 1807, in a large square wooden house, which is still standing, on the corner of Fore and Hancock Streets; but the family moved to the brick house when he was a baby, and this was his boyhood home. Many of its furnishings remain exactly as they were a hundred years ago. The same heavy cooking utensils are ranged about the fireplace in the kitchen, and around one of the mantels is quaint old chintz printed with camp scenes of the War of 1812. On the third floor is a room with a four-posted, chintz-canopied bedstead, and here the poet slept both in his boyhood and also on his visits home in later years. Business blocks now cut off the view, but when Longfellow was a boy, he could see from his window the lighthouse of which he has written, —

> "Like the great giant Christopher it stands
> Upon the brink of the tempestuous wave,
> Wading far out among the rocks and sands,
> The night o'ertaken mariner to save."

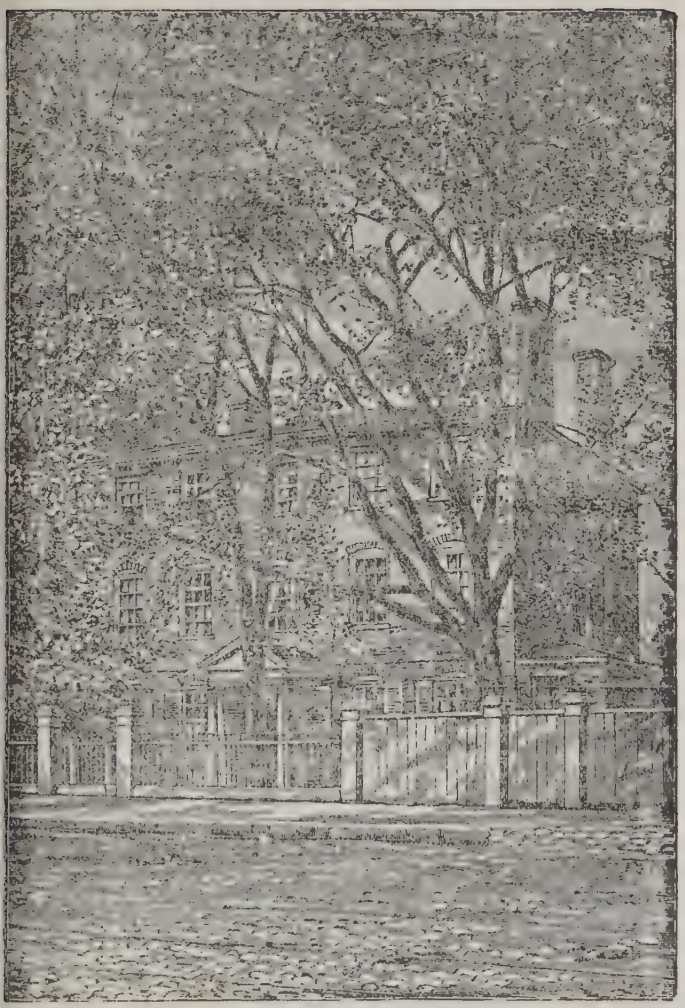
Portland was a pleasant city for a boy to grow up in. There were long lines of shaded streets; there was charming Deering's Woods; and, best of all, there was the ocean "with its sea-tides tossing free." There were islands near

and islands far, wonderfully beautiful and fascinating; and there were the black wharfs at which the white-sailed ships from the other side of the world made their moorings. It was an enchanted city for an imaginative boy; and in his poem, *My Lost Youth*, Longfellow has told how delightful it all seemed to him.

The poet's father, Stephen Longfellow, was a prominent lawyer, who held in the course of his life numerous prominent positions. Several times he was a member of the State Legislature, and from 1823 to 1825 he was a member of the National House of Representatives. His wife, Zilpah Wadsworth, was a descendant of John Alden and Priscilla of Mayflower fame. Her father had fought in the Revolution, and her brother Henry, only three years before the birth of his namesake, had been killed in an attack upon the pirates of Tripoli. The spacious sitting-room in the old brick house must have listened to many thrilling war stories, as the eight Longfellow children gathered around the big center table on winter evenings.

Little boys and girls usually went first to a "dame school," that is, one presided over by some old lady; and the small Henry was sent to one ruled by a certain "Marm Fellows." Later, he went to the public school. It is a long way back to 1813, but in that year, when the little boy was only six years old, he brought proudly home a report — still in existence — which declared that his conduct had been "very correct and amiable," and that he had made much improvement in spelling and writing. He was fond of poetry even in those days, and used to go about the house reciting any verses that had struck his fancy. He liked the flute, and soon learned to play it with spirit and charm.

The boy fitted for college at the Portland Academy. One of his teachers was Jacob Abbott, who wrote the *Rollo Books* and scores of other volumes for boys and girls. Henry Longfellow, too, was determined to become an author, a poet, and when he was only thirteen he wrote, among other verses, *The Battle of Lovell's Pond*. This pictured the attack of Captain John Lovell upon the Indian



THE WADSWORTH-LONGFELLOW HOUSE, PORTLAND

villages on the Saco River. Lovell and thirty of his forty-six men were slain. This was in 1724, and was the last serious fight with the Indians in that part of the country. The young writer believed that this was "good enough to print." He screwed up his courage and dropped the manuscript into the box of one of the Portland weeklies. Evidently the editor did not agree with him, for the poem was not published. Thereupon the boy, with perhaps a bit of indignation, sent it to the rival weekly. It came out promptly, and he felt, as he said many years later, "such a thrill of delight" as none of his other publications had ever given him.

Stephen Longfellow was a graduate of Harvard, but he was also a trustee of Bowdoin College, in Brunswick, Maine, and, perhaps partly for this reason, he chose the smaller institution for his son. The boy was now fifteen, and entered as a sophomore. "He was slight and erect, his complexion light, his nose rather prominent, his eyes clear and blue, and his well-formed head covered with a profusion of brown hair waving loosely." He was always a gentleman, and one who knew him at the time speaks emphatically of his "well-bred manners." He was a favorite among the students, and he did the college work so well that he stood fourth in a class of thirty-eight. But he learned much more than the prescribed lessons, for he read widely. At graduation he begged his father for a year at Harvard. "The truth is," he pleaded, "I desire future eminence in literature. My whole soul burns most ardently for this, and every earthly thought centers in it." This confession was not altogether agreeable to the father. He had sympathy with his son's love of study, but prices paid for literature in 1825 were small, and to write seemed to him a very precarious fashion of attempting to make one's living. He replied that "eminence in literature" was well enough for men of means, but that a young man who had his way to make in the world would better set his ambition on something more likely to furnish him with bread and butter.

So spoke one of the trustees of Bowdoin, and the young

man yielded to his father's wish and began to study law. Another trustee, however, one Benjamin Orr, had quite a different scheme in mind. He was in the habit of visiting the oral examinations at the college, and was much dreaded by the students because of his keen criticisms and his high ideals of scholarship. On one of these visits Longfellow was called upon to read his translation of one of the odes of Horace. It was so well done that it made a deep impression upon the critical visitor; and when it was decided to establish a professorship of modern languages at Bowdoin, Mr. Orr said promptly; " Mr. Longfellow is your man. He is an admirable classical scholar. I have seldom heard anything more beautiful than his translation of one of the most difficult odes of Horace." The position was offered to Mr. Longfellow.

This prospective professor was only nineteen years old. but the college agreed to wait for him until he had reached the mature age of twenty-two, provided he would spend the three years in Europe. His father agreed to provide him with the necessary money, and he started joyfully. For three years he traveled in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and England. He studied the languages of these countries and he worked hard; but he also saw their beautiful sights and learned the thoughts and ways of their people, and he was radiantly happy.

Going to Europe was not the everyday occurrence that it is now, and when the young man returned, in 1829, to take up his work at Bowdoin, he was looked upon not only with the respect due to his attainments, but also with a sort of reverence for the wonderful advantages that he had enjoyed. He worked hard, — one class came before his seven-o'clock breakfast, — but his students liked him and were proud of him, and he was happy. His salary was eight hundred dollars a year, with the addition of an extra hundred for acting as college librarian; but nine hundred dollars was a sum to be looked upon with respect in those days of small expenses and low prices, and two years later the young professor ventured to take a wife, Mary Storer Potter, the daughter of Judge Potter, of Portland.

Longfellow the poet was thus far hardly more than Longfellow the professor. He did not give up writing, but his writing was closely connected with his teaching. He translated a French grammar and did still other translating and editing, and published articles on the literature of France and Spain. One of these he revised and expanded and added to it a translation of some Spanish poems, from which it took its title of *Coplas de Manrique*. *Coplas* are short stanzas of a peculiar form, and these of Jorge Manrique were a series of beautiful meditations on the death of his father, written in the fifteenth century. This was Longfellow's first original volume, and was published by Allen and Ticknor, the same firm that, under another name, still publishes his poems. *Outre-Mer* — meaning *beyond the sea* — came next. This is a collection of sketches of his travels in Europe. All this writing was well done. It is graceful and thoughtful. It shows itself to be the work of a cultivated, scholarly man, and it was favorably spoken of. It was agreeable reading, but there was nothing in it to show that some day the writer would come close to the hearts of the people, that he would produce poems which would win not only their respect, but their eager affection.

The ability of the young professor had become known at Harvard, and on the resignation of Professor George Ticknor, who had occupied the chair of modern languages, Longfellow was asked to succeed him. He decided to take another trip to Europe to do still further work in languages and literature. In Holland, the first grief of his life came upon him in the death of his wife. He remained abroad a year and a half; he did the work for which he had come, but his heart was heavy with sadness. Some years later, his sorrow found expression in the poem *Footsteps of Angels*. In this he speaks of seeing, as in a vision, the forms of departed friends. Of her he says, —

> " And with them the Being Beauteous,
> Who unto my youth was given,
> More than all things else to love me,
> And is now a saint in heaven.

" With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

" And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies."

The poem closes, —

" Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!"

When Longfellow returned to America, his seventeen years at Harvard began. He was thirty years old, but he looked some years younger; and when he appeared at the door of Craigie House and asked if he might engage a room there, the stately Madam Craigie demurred and said that she did not take students.

" But I am not a student," he replied. " I am a professor in the University."

" A professor? " She looked curiously at one so like most students in appearance.

" I am Professor Longfellow," he said.

" If you are the author of *Outre-Mer*, then you may come," said the old lady, and proceeded to show him her house. She led him up the broad staircase, and, proud of the historic mansion, opened one spacious room after another, only to close the door of each, saying, " You cannot have that," until at length she led him into the southeast corner room on the second story. " This was General Washington's chamber," she said; " you may have this." And here he gladly set up his home.

Craigie House is a roomy, dignified mansion on Brattle Street in Cambridge. Around it were then wide-spreading green fields, and there was a clear outlook across the meadows to the winding Charles River and the gentle hills

beyond. In 1759, a rich Tory merchant, John Vassall, built the house for his bride, who was a sister of the last royal governor of the province. When the Revolution broke out, Vassall fled to London, and the Province of Massachusetts took possession of the house. At one time a battalion of soldiers were sheltered within its walls; but when Washington arrived in Cambridge, this house, the most commodious in the place, served as his headquarters; and here he remained during the anxious days of the siege of Boston. In Longfellow's poem, *To a Child*, he says, —

> " Once, ah, once, within these walls,
> One whom memory oft recalls,
> The Father of his Country, dwelt.
> And yonder meadows, broad and damp,
> The fires of the besieging camp
> Encircled with a burning belt.
> Up and down these echoing stairs,
> Heavy with the weight of cares,
> Sounded his majestic tread;
> Yes, within this very room
> Sat he in those hours of gloom,
> Weary both in heart and head."

Later, the Vassall House was sold, and in 1792, it came into the hands of Andrew Craigie, who had been Apothecary-General to the Continental Army. It became now the Craigie House, and at the death of her husband, it was occupied alone by the august Madam Craigie, who would lodge professors but not students. At her death, Dr. Worcester of dictionary fame bought the house, and in 1843 he sold it to Longfellow.

As a professor, Longfellow was respected by the students for his knowledge and his increasing fame, but he was loved for his never-failing kindness and his gentle courtesy. On one occasion there was a rebellion among the college boys. They were assembled in the college yard, and one professor after another tried in vain to obtain a hearing from them. At last, Longfellow came forward, and then there was a hush, and the word went round, " Let 's hear Professor

Longfellow, for he always treats us as gentlemen." The famous editor and clergyman, Edward Everett Hale, author of *The Man without a Country*, was one of Longfellow's pupils, and says of him: —

" From the first he chose to take with us the relation of a personal friend a few years older than we were.

" As it happened, the regular recitation rooms of the college were all in use, and indeed, I think he was hardly expected to teach any language at all. He was to oversee the department and to lecture. But he seemed to teach us German for the love of it; I know I thought he did, and till now it never occurred to me to ask whether it were a part of his regular duty. Anyway, we did not meet him in one of the rather dingy ' recitation rooms,' but in a sort of parlor, carpeted, hung with pictures, and otherwise handsomely furnished, which was, I believe, called the ' Corporation Room.' We sat round a mahogany table, which was reported to be meant for the dinners of the trustees, and the whole affair had the aspect of a friendly gathering in a private house, in which the study of German was the amusement of the occasion. These accidental surroundings of the place characterize well enough the whole proceeding.

" He began with familiar ballads, read them to us, and made us read them to him. Of course, we soon committed them to memory without meaning to, and I think this was probably part of his theory. At the same time we were learning the paradigms by rote. But we never studied the grammar except to learn them, nor do I know to this hour what are the contents of half the pages in the regular German grammars.

" This was quite too good to last; for his regular duty was the oversight of five or more instructors, who were teaching French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to two or three hundred undergraduates. All these gentlemen were of European birth, and you know how undergraduates are apt to fare with such men. Mr. Longfellow had a real administration of the whole department. His title was ' Smith Professor of Modern Literature,' but we always called him ' the Head,' because he was head of the depart-

ment. We never knew when he might look in on a recitation and virtually conduct it. We were delighted to have him come. Any slipshod work of some poor wretch from France, who was tormented by wild-cat Sophomores, would be made straight and decorous and all right. We all knew he was a poet, and were proud to have him in the college, but at the same time we respected him as a man of affairs.

" Besides this, he lectured on authors or more general subjects. I think attendance was voluntary, but I know we never missed a lecture."

During this period, Longfellow wrote to a friend, " Most of the time I am alone, smoke a good deal, wear a broad-brimmed black hat, black frockcoat, and a black cane. Molest no one. Dine out frequently. In winter go much into Boston society." This hardly sounds like the record of the busy man that he was. His teaching and the oversight of his department required much time, and he was also deep in literary work. He published the romance *Hyperion* which was received with far more enthusiasm than *Outre-Mer*. He wrote poems for magazines, and at last, in 1839, he collected these poems into a thin little volume called *Voices of the Night*. Here was *The Reaper and the Flowers*, which has brought comfort to many a sorrowing mother; and here was the poem that is like a trumpet call to duty, the *Psalm of Life*, the poem that has inspired thousands to

" Be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate," —

the poem that to every one who reads it for the first time is always new and strong and wonderful.

There was no question of the welcome that awaited his next volume, which came out two years later. Here was *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, which was founded upon a real occurrence. Of this Longfellow wrote in his journal, —

" *December 17.* — News of shipwrecks, horrible, on the coast. Forty bodies washed ashore near Gloucester. One woman lashed to a piece of wreck. There is a reef called Norman's Woe. where many of these took place. Among

others the schooner Hesperus. Also, the Seaflower, of Black Rock. I will write a ballad on this.

"*December 30.* — Wrote last evening a notice of Allston's poems, after which sat till 1 o'clock by the fire, smoking; when suddenly it came into my head to write the Ballad of the Schooner Hesperus, which I accordingly did. Then went to bed, but could not sleep. New thoughts were running in my mind, and I got up to add them to the Ballad. It was 3 by the clock."

The Village Blacksmith is also in this volume, and so is *Excelsior*, whose title is the Latin word for *higher*. This word caught the poet's eye one evening as he was glancing over a newspaper, and on the nearest bit of paper, which chanced to be a letter from Charles Sumner, he wrote the poem. This scrap of paper is now in the library of Harvard University. Thus far his poems had manifested thought and fancy and grace and beauty of expression, but in this little volume was *The Skeleton in Armor*, and here was imagination of a higher type than he had shown before. A skeleton in broken and corroded armor had been dug up at Fall River, and in the fancy of the poet it became that of a "viking bold." He pictured the wild life of the northern seas, the theft of the willing maiden who became the viking's wife, and his building for her the famous Round Tower of Newport, Rhode Island. Whatever the mysterious tower was really built for, Longfellow says serenely that his use of it is "sufficiently well established for the purpose of a ballad."

In 1842, Longfellow made his third visit to Europe. A year later, he married Miss Frances Appleton of Boston. William Winter said that to remember her "is to wonder that so much loveliness and worth could take a mortal shape." Longfellow himself has pictured her, as *Mary Ashburton*, in *Hyperion*. Eighteen years of quiet enjoyment followed. The old mansion rang joyously with the voices of his children; friends gathered around him; the days passed happily; and poem after poem came from his hand. Most of them were on foreign subjects, and those who were inclined to cavil whispered that there were poetic

themes in America as well as across the ocean. One day Hawthorne brought to dine with the poet a friend, who in the course of conversation said that he had been urging Hawthorne to write a romance on the story of the expulsion of the Acadians from Nova Scotia in 1755. The homes of these French peasants were burned, and they themselves were driven on shipboard to be scattered along the American coast. Among them were the young couple, married only that morning, whom Longfellow pictures as Gabriel and Evangeline. In the confusion and wretchedness they were separated and put on different vessels. Evangeline searches for Gabriel throughout the colonies, and at last finds him on his deathbed in a hospital. This was the story. It did not appeal to Hawthorne as suited for a tale; but to Longfellow it was the suggestion for his first important American poem, *Evangeline*. Longfellow never visited the scenes of this poem. "He never came to see us," said one of the dwellers in Grand Pré. "I wish he had. We should have been so glad to welcome him and to do all that we could for him." His descriptions were all written from those given by others; but they are so accurate that travelers do not need to have pointed out to them the meadows and dikes of Grand Pré, the Basin of Minas, and the mist-wreathed summit of Blomidon. Of the conclusion of the poem, Longfellow says: —

"I was passing down Spruce Street [Philadelphia] one day toward my hotel, after a walk, when my attention was attracted to a large building with beautiful trees about it, inside of a high enclosure. I walked along until I came to the great gate, and then stepped inside, and looked carefully over the place. The charming picture of lawn, flowerbeds, and shade which it presented made an impression which has never left me, and when I came to write *Evangeline*, I placed the final scene, the meeting between Evangeline and Gabriel and the death, at the poorhouse, and the burial in an old Catholic graveyard not far away, which I found by chance in another of my walks."

America was young, and *Evangeline* was "the first good poem of any length on an American subject." The poet

had come to his own; he was moved by a new inspiration. The warmest of praises poured in upon him from far and near, and in his next volume he made a graceful acknowledgment: —

> "Thanks for the sympathies that ye have shown!
> Thanks for each kindly word, each silent token,
> That teaches me, when seeming most alone,
> Friends are around us, though no word be spoken."

The longest poem in the collection is *The Building of the Ship*, with its threefold significance: the making of a ship and giving it to the ocean; the marriage of the master's daughter to the youth of her choice; and, last, the noble apostrophe to the *Ship of State*. Mr. Noah Brooks one day recited to President Lincoln the closing stanzas, beginning with the launching of the vessel. When he came to

> "Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee,
> Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
> Our faith, triumphant o'er our fears,
> Are all with thee, — are all with thee!" —

Lincoln's eyes were full of tears. For some minutes he could not speak; then he said with his own noble simplicity of expression, "It is a wonderful gift to be able to stir men like that."

The long years of teaching and supervising had begun to seem wearisome to the poet, and at length he resigned his professorship and devoted himself to his writing and the enjoyment of his home. The inspiration of the earlier days of America did not leave him, and soon he published *The Song of Hiawatha*. Some of the critics had found fault with the meter of *Evangeline*, declaring that it belonged to Latin and had no proper place in English verse; and now some of them objected to the form and meter of *Hiawatha*. It is written in a Finnish meter, with a repetition of lines in nearly the same words. This was almost new in English verse. The critics criticized it and the parodists parodied it, but it held its place, and he would be laughed to scorn who should venture to object to it to-day. Hiawatha pictures the life and thoughts of the Indians, beautified, per-

haps, by the glow of the poetic imagination, but with a sympathetic and appreciative accuracy that have won for its author the love of the Indians themselves.

This same poetic imagination now shone upon the rather somber life of the Pilgrim Fathers, and Longfellow wrote *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, the story of the love of his ancestors, John Alden and Priscilla Mullens, and her memorable " Why don't you speak for yourself, John? " when, faithful to the stern demands of friendship, he tried honestly to plead the cause of the doughty captain, Miles Standish.

In 1861, Mrs. Longfellow was one day amusing her children by sealing up bits of their curls in little packages. Her dress caught fire from the burning wax, and a few hours later she died. More than a score of years remained to the poet, and he had the love of his children and the comfort of his work, but his grief was so deep and lasting that he could not trust himself to speak the beloved name of his wife. After his death there was found in his portfolio his poem on *The Cross of Snow*, which closes: —

" There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died."

The years went on. New volumes of verse were published, among them the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, and a translation of one of the greatest poems of the world, Dante's *Divine Comedy*. It pictures the soul of man journeying through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. Much of it is gloomy and terrible; but it has the name " comedy " because of its happy ending.

The work of some writers appeals only to certain classes of people, the educated, the traveled, the merry, or the sad; but Longfellow's appeals to the human heart and made friends wherever it went. It was widely read in England as well as in America, and in translations was

well known on the Continent. The poet now made a fourth visit to Europe; and honors were heaped upon him. Dickens and Tennyson gave him their warmest friendship. The Queen invited him to Windsor Castle. Harvard had already made him a Doctor of Laws, and now Cambridge conferred the degree a second time. Oxford gave him the degree of Doctor of Civil Laws. An English reporter describes him as he appeared at Cambridge in the scarlet robes of an academic dignitary: —

"The face was one which, I think, would have caught the spectator's glance even if his attention had not been called to it by the cheers which greeted Longfellow's appearance in the robes of an LL.D. Long white silken hair and a beard of patriarchal length and whiteness inclosed a young, fresh-colored countenance, with fine-cut features and deep sunken eyes, overshadowed by massive black eyebrows. Looking at him, you had the feeling that the white head of hair and beard were a mask put on to conceal a young man's face; and that if the poet chose he could throw off the disguise, and appear as a man in the prime and bloom of life."

During the years following his return from Europe, Longfellow published seven or eight more volumes of poetry. It is not always fair by any means to gauge an author's ability by his income, but it is at least interesting to note that for the *Psalm of Life* Longfellow never received even the five dollars that he was promised, but that for his *Hanging of the Crane*, which came out in 1873, he was paid four thousand dollars. On the fiftieth anniversary of his graduation from Bowdoin College, he read his noble poem, *Morituri Salutamus*. These words, meaning, *we who are about to die salute you*, were spoken by Roman gladiators to the Emperor as they entered the arena; and though the poem showed no sign of waning powers, there was a sadness about it, for the end could not be expected to be many years away.

Longfellow named his next volume, which he realized would probably be his last, *Ultima Thule*. *Thule*, or Norway, was the most distant land known to the Romans, and

ultima means *the utmost;* therefore, the two words came to mean the extreme end, especially the end of life. In this volume is his poem of thanks and love to the children of Cambridge for their gift of an armchair. *The Village Blacksmith* had always been a general favorite, and pilgrims to Cambridge never failed to visit the spreading chestnut tree under which the smithy had once stood. In 1876, the city government decided to cut down the tree lest some forgetful driver of a high-piled load should be caught among its branches. It was suggested that some memento of this tree should be given to the poet by the children of the place, and the result was their presentation to him, on his seventy-second birthday, of a chair made of its wood. It is ebonized, and in the back and elsewhere are carvings of horsechestnut leaves and blossoms. Under the cushion is a brass plate on which is the following inscription: —

To
The Author
of
The Village Blacksmith
This chair, made from the wood of the
spreading chestnut tree,
is presented as
An expression of grateful regard and veneration
by
The Children of Cambridge,
who with their friends join in best wishes
and congratulations
on
This Anniversary,
February 27, 1879.

Around the seat, in raised German text, are the lines from the poem, —

" And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor."

A year later, in 1880, Cambridge celebrated the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding, and at the children's festival in Sanders Theatre, the chair stood in a prominent place on the platform. The Poem, *From My Armchair*, which begins —

> " Am I a king that I should call my own
> This splendid ebon throne ? " —

was read aloud; and then the poet, who never made public speeches, stepped forward and made a little speech expressly to the children, thanking them in prose, as he had already done in verse, for their gift.

Housekeeping at Craigie House now became somewhat difficult, for hundreds of small boys and girls presented themselves at the door, asking to see the chair, but hoping to see its owner. The poet gave orders that not one child, no matter how muddy his feet might be, should be turned away. Each one received a printed copy of the poem, and often a few kindly words from the poet. Longfellow's friend, Luigi Monti, the original of *The Sicilian*, in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, came one Christmas Day to dine with the poet, and when near the gate met a girl of some twelve years who asked him shyly where Mr. Longfellow lived.

He showed her the house, and she asked, " Do you think I can go into the yard? "

" Oh, yes," said Signor Monti. " Do you see the room on the left? That is where Martha Washington held her receptions a hundred years ago. If you look at the windows on the right, you will probably see a white-haired gentleman reading a paper. Well, that will be Mr. Longfellow."

The child looked gratified and happy at the unexpected pleasure of really seeing the man whose poems she said she loved. As Signor Monti drew near the house, he saw Mr. Longfellow standing with his back against the window, his head out of sight. When he went in, the kind-hearted Italian said: —

" Do look out of the window and bow to that little girl who wants to see you very much."

" A little girl wants to see me very much? Where is she? " He hastened to the door, and, beckoning with his hand, called out, " Come here, little girl; come here, if you want to see me." She came forward, and he took her hand and asked her name. Then he kindly led her into the house, showed her the old clock on the stairs, the children's chair, and the various souvenirs which he had gathered. This was but one little instance of many.

Longfellow's courtesy never failed. He was patient with bores, and one day when Professor Charles Eliot Norton, the distinguished author, urged him not to allow himself to be annoyed by a certain troublesome man who was both bold and dishonest, Longfellow looked up with a reproving smile and queried with mock seriousness, " But, Charles, if I were not kind to him, who would be? " A cynical man of Cambridge, who had made up his mind that all the poor were good and all the rich bad, said, " I will make an exception of one rich man, and that is Mr. Longfellow. You have no idea how much the laboring men of Cambridge think of him. There is many and many a family that gets a load of coal from him, without anybody 's knowing where it comes from."

As Longfellow's seventy-fifth birthday drew near, there was a desire throughout the country to show him some special honor. This was done by having his poems recited by children in hundreds, perhaps thousands, of schools.

Not many weeks later, the children, as they passed his gate, whispered to one another, " Don't make any noise; Mr. Longfellow is sick." On the 24th of March, 1882, the bells tolled for his death. Two days later, followed by the love of thousands, he was laid in beautiful Mount Auburn Cemetery.

It was of this, his last birthday, that Whittier wrote: —

" With a glory of winter sunshine
Over his locks of gray,
In the old historic mansion
He sat on his last birthday.

" With his books and his pleasant pictures,
And his household and his kin,
While a sound as of myriads singing
From far and near stole in.

" It came from his own fair city,
From the prairie's boundless plain,
From the Golden Gate of sunset,
And the cedarn woods of Maine.

" And his heart grew warm within him,
And his moistening eyes grew dim,
For he knew that his country's children
Were singing the songs of him:

" The lays of his life's glad morning,
The psalms of his evening time,
Whose echoes shall float forever
On the winds of every clime.

" All their beautiful consolations,
Sent forth like birds of cheer,
Came flocking back to his windows,
And sang in the Poet's ear.

" Grateful, but solemn and tender,
The music rose and fell,
With a joy akin to sadness
And a greeting like farewell.

" With a sense of awe he listened
To the voices sweet and young;
The last of earth and the first of heaven
Seemed in the songs they sung.

" And waiting a little longer
For the wonderful change to come,
He heard the Summoning Angel,
Who calls God's children home!

" And to him in a holier welcome
Was the mystical meaning given
Of the words of the blessed Master;
' Of such is the kingdom of heaven ! ' "

THE HISTORY OF LONGFELLOW'S EVANGELINE

The origin of the tale brings out one of those interesting incidents of the relations of authors toward each other which happily are not uncommon. In Hawthorne's *American Note-Books*, under date of October 24, 1838, occurs this paragraph: "H. L. C—— [the Reverend H. L. Conolly, of Boston, a friend whom Hawthorne brought to visit Longfellow] heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage day, all the men of the province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England, among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him, wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last, when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his deathbed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise."

It may have been the same H. L. C. who dined with Hawthorne at Mr. Longfellow's one day, and told the poet that he had been trying to persuade Hawthorne to write a story on this theme. Hawthorne said he could not see in it the material for a tale, but Longfellow at once caught at it as the suggestion for a poem. "Give it to me," he said, "and promise that you will not write about it until I have written the poem." Hawthorne readily consented, and when *Evangeline* appeared was as quick to give expression to his admiration as the poet had been in reviewing *Twice-Told Tales*. He wrote to Longfellow and sent him a copy of a Salem newspaper in which he had noticed *Evangeline*. Longfellow replied: —

"My dear Hawthorne,— I have been waiting and waiting in the hope of seeing you in Cambridge. . . . I have been

meditating upon your letter, and pondering with friendly admiration your review of *Evangeline*, in connection with the subject of which, that is to say, the Acadians, a literary project arises in my mind for you to execute. Perhaps I can pay you back in part your own generous gift, by giving you a theme for story in return for a theme for song. It is neither more nor less than the history of the Acadians *after* their expulsion as well as before. Felton has been making some researches in the state archives, and offers to resign the documents into your hands.

"Pray come and see me about it without delay. Come so as to pass a night with us, if possible, this week, if not a day and night. Ever sincerely yours,

"HENRY W. LONGFELLOW."

The poet never visited the scenes of his poem, though travelers have testified to the accuracy of the portraiture. "I have never been in Nova Scotia," he wrote to a friend. "As far as I remember, the authorities I mostly relied on in writing *Evangeline* were the Abbé Raynal and Mr. Haliburton: the first for the pastoral, simple life of the Acadians; the second for the history of their banishment." He gave to a Philadelphia journalist a reminiscence of his first thought of the material which forms the conclusion of the poem. "I was passing down Spruce Street [Philadelphia] one day toward my hotel, after a walk, when my attention was attracted to a large building with beautiful trees about it, inside of a high enclosure. I walked along until I came to the great gate, and then stepped inside, and looked carefully over the place. The charming picture of lawn, flowerbeds, and shade which it presented made an impression which has never left me, and when I came to write *Evangeline* I placed the final scene, the meeting between Evangeline and Gabriel and the death, at the poorhouse, and the burial in an old Catholic graveyard not far away, which I found by chance in another of my walks."

The Abbé Raynal was a French priest (1711–96) who published *A Philosophical History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies* [illegible]

he included an account of affairs in Canada and Nova Scotia. He probably exaggerated the simplicity and innocence of the Acadians. Thomas C. Haliburton wrote *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, published in 1829.

THE METER OF EVANGELINE

THE meter of *Evangeline* is what is called *hexameter* (from two Greek words meaning *six* and *measure*). In each line there are six divisions, or measures. In the first five measures there are usually three syllables, the first of which is accented or stressed. The last measure of the line usually has only two syllables, the first of which is stressed. Thus we may represent the meter of a line in this way: —

Some′ what ă	part′ from the	vĭl′lage and	near′ĕr the	Ba′sĭn of	Mĭ′nas
1	2	3	4	5	6

An examination will show a great variation among the lines, as to the number of syllables and the placing of the accents. This variation, though slight, helps to prevent a sense of monotony in form. Each line has, near the middle, a pause called a *cesura*, which saves the line from sounding " breathless," or too long-drawn-out.

The measure that Longfellow uses in *Evangeline* is imitated from the old Greek poems the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Some of the poet's friends were alarmed when they heard that he was using this meter, for they said it was not suitable for the English language, which is less light and flexible than the Greek. But a reading of the poem convinced them that the meter was well chosen. It lends itself easily to the lingering melancholy which marks the greater part of *Evangeline*, and the poet's fine sense of harmony between subject and form is rarely better shown than in this poem. The fall of the verse at the end of the line and the sharp recovery at the beginning of the next will be snares to the reader, who must beware of a jerking style of delivery. The voice naturally seeks a rest in the middle of the line, and this rest, or cesural pause, should be carefully regarded; a little practice will enable one to acquire that habit of reading the hexameter, which we may liken, roughly, to the climbing of a hill, resting a moment on the summit, and

then descending the other side. The charm in reading *Evangeline* aloud, after a clear understanding of the sense, which is the essential in all good reading, is found in this gentle labor of the former half of the line, and gentle acceleration of the latter half.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The country now known as Nova Scotia, and at one time called Acadie by the French, was in the hands of the French and English by turns until the year 1713, when, by the Peace of Utrecht, it was yielded by France to Great Britain. It has ever since remained in the possession of the English. In 1713 the inhabitants of the peninsula were mostly French farmers and fishermen, living about Minas Basin and on Annapolis River. Over these people the English Government exercised only slight control. It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century, when Halifax was founded, that the English themselves began to make settlements in the country. Between the English and French settlers a jealousy soon sprang up, which was increased by the beginning of the Seven Years' War, in which the two mother countries were to settle the question of supremacy in North America. The French engaged in a long dispute with the English regarding the boundaries of Acadie, which had not been clearly agreed upon by treaty. The sympathies of the Acadians were, of course, with the French, but they claimed the right to remain neutral in all disagreements between the Governments. One point that caused great trouble was the oath of allegiance to the Crown of England. The Acadians refused to take this oath, except in a form that would excuse them, in case of war, from fighting against the French, to whom they were bound by ties of blood and religion.

Most of the Acadians were probably simple-minded and peaceful people, who only wanted to live quietly on their own land and trouble nobody; but there were a few restless and spirited young men, and some priests, who made no secret of their hatred for the English, and their intention of defying the power that now ruled in the peninsula. As the feeling between the two nationalities grew more bit-

ter, the problem of how to deal with the Acadians became more difficult to the English colony. The officers of the colony finally resolved, without consulting the home Government, to remove the Acadians to other parts of North America, distributing them through the Eastern and Southern Colonies, so that there would be no danger of their getting together for purposes of revenge. To take this harsh and unusual action required secret preparation. There were at the service of the English governor a number of New England troops who had been brought to Nova Scotia to capture the forts at the head of the Bay of Fundy. These troops were under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Winslow, of Massachusetts, a great-grandson of Governor Winslow, of Plymouth. He and his assistant, Captain Murray, were told to think of some apparently harmless scheme for bringing the Acadians together, so that none might take alarm and escape. On the 2d of September, 1755, Winslow issued an order to the inhabitants of the Minas region, requesting all the men over ten years of age to meet in the church at Grand Pré, on the 5th, to hear some news from the governor. Upon the day named, 418 men and boys came together at the church. Winslow placed a guard around the building, and then made his terrible announcement: The Acadians were all to be removed from the country. At the same time similar plans were carried out at two other points in the Acadian territory.

Ships had been ordered from Boston, but there was so much danger of rebellion among the prisoners that it was decided to take them aboard the vessels that had brought the troops. This was done on the 10th of September. When the other ships arrived, the Acadians — men, women, and children, to the number of seven thousand — were carried away to North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. In the haste and confusion of embarking, many families and friends were separated, some of whom were never again united. *Evangeline* is the story of such a separation.

EVANGELINE

PRELUDE

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines
and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct
in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and pro-
phetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their
bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neigh-
boring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail
of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts
that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland
the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Aca-
dian farmers, —
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the
woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image
of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers for-
ever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts
of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them
far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village
of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

PART THE FIRST

I

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grande-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,

REVEREND WALKED HE AMONG THEM (*Line 45*)

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers;
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings
Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal beauty —
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the roadside,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard:

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs and the harrows;
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the selfsame
Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal.
Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;
Or, at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered

Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But among all who came young Gabriel only was welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
She too would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-Saints!
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love. and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors around him;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending

Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the seaside,
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders

Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas.
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song. with measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when, through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the marshes."
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside:—
"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!

Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued: —
"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean time
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer: — "Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children."
"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said warmly the blacksmith,
Shaking his head as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he continued: —
"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,
Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds;
Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of the mower."
Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer: —
"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,
Safer within these peaceful dikes besieged by the ocean,
Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.
Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow
Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night of the contract.
Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village
Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe round about them,
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and inkhorn.
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our children?"
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her lover's,
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had spoken,
And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

III

Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary public;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung

Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public, —
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;
And what their errand may be I know no better than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention
Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?"
"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;
"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!"
But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public, —
"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."
This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it
When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.
"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,
While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
Sat the lovers and whispered together, beholding the moon rise
Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway
Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearthstones,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with

Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar.

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and neighboring hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,
All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the fiddler

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*,
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the headstones
Garlands of autumn leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.
"You are convened this day," he said, "by his Majesty's orders.
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered his kindness
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch:
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field, and shatters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the speaker.
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-way.
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly he shouted,—
"Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn them allegiance!
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;
Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.
"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from His cross is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!
Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate outbreak,
While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar;
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,
Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor, and roofed each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild flowers;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy;
And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.
Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended, —
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience!
Then, all forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapors
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,

"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper untasted.
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world He created!
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of Heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.

V

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,

Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;
All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and wayworn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,
Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions: —
"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the wayside
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction, —
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered, —
"Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father
Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his bosom.
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats: and in the confusion

Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.
Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-weed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,
Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard, —
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's delicate sea-shore.
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken.
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.
"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden,
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above them

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.

Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the seashore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,

Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people, —
"Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard."
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the sea-side,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound like the voice of a vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.
'T was the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

PART THE SECOND

I

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from the northeast
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas, —
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended,

Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished;
As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine,
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and endeavor;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,
Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom
He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.
Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.
Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and known him,
But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "Oh, yes! we have seen him.
He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies;

Coureurs-des-bois are they, and famous hunters and trappers."
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "Oh, yes! we have seen him.
He is a voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana."
Then would they say, "Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?
Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?
Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!
Thou art too fair to be left to braid Saint Catherine's tresses."
Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, "I cannot!
Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
Thereupon the priest, her friend and father confessor,
Said, with a smile, "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!
Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;
That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.
Patience; accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work of affection!
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven!"
Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered, "Despair not!"
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's footsteps;—
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence;
But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley:
Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur;
Happy, at length, if he find a spot where it reaches an outlet.

II

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.

It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common misfortune;
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sandbars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro cabins and dove-cots.
They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.

They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons
Home to their roots in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around them;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sadness, —
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that faintly

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence and giving tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.
Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,
While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
Far off, — indistinct, — as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya,
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grapevine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos;
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows;
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers;
Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician!
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"

Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy!
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered, —
"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning,
Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-trees;
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape;
Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.
Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,
And, through the amber air, above the crest of the woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring dwelling;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

III

Near to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.
Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grapevines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward
Pushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said, "If you came by the Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent,
"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.
Then the good Basil said, — and his voice grew blithe as he said it, —
"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit

Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,
He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him
Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.
Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.
Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning,
We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.
Long under Basil's roof had he lived, like a god on Olympus,
Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Arcadian minstrel!"
As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straightway
Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old man
Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.
Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant blacksmith,
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanor;
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them;
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy veranda,
Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil
Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened: —
"Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer;
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel through the water,
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms and your cattle."
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils,
While his huge, brown hand came thundering down on the table,
So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer: —
"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"
Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.

It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the herdsman.
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors:
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as strangers,
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the maddening
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river

Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit.
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden
Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and worship,
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-flies,
Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel! O my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!

Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands around me!
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy slumbers!
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about thee?"
Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoorwill sounded
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighboring thickets,
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into silence.
"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of darkness;
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the garden
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his tresses
With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of crystal.
"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy threshold;
"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and famine,
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom was coming."
"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil descended
Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were waiting.
Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine, and gladness,
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding before them,
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,
Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and uncertain
Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country;
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,
Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord
That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from the Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.

Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage marauders;
Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil

Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only embers and ashes.
And though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches,
Where her Canadian husband, a coureur-des-bois, had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted among them
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up in their blankets,

Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian accent,
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compassion,
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of the Mowis;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,
And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her people.

Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendor
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the swallow.
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed, and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along,—"On the western slope of these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they hear him."

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered,
"Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!"
Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers and bade them
Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the forest,
And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the maize-ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the teacher.
Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity answered: —
"Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his journey!"
Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent of kindness;
But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-flakes
Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.
"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but in autumn,
When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."
Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,
"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."
So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,
Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other, —
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing
Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving about her,
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming

Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-field.
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.
"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!
Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow,
See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet;
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,—yet Gabriel came not;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and bluebird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted

Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.
And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St. Lawrence,
Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden; —
Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,
Now in secluded hamlets, and towns and populous cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

V

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,
And the streets still reëcho the names of the trees of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a stranger;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,

Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.
Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not absent;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow,
Meekly with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city.

Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
Night after night when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.
Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,
Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of existence
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm the oppressor;
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger;—
Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadow and woodlands;—

Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and wicket
Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord: — "The poor ye always have with you."
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden,
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east-wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;

Something within her said, "At length thy trials are ended;"
And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the roadside.
Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night time;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.

Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saintlike,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank thee!"

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and forever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labors,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy;
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

STUDY HELPS

BY MARGARET ASHMUN

PART THE FIRST

Prelude, and Section I. The events related in the first part of the poem took place in 1755. Read the *Historical Introduction* as far as the sentence beginning, *The officers of the colony.* Consult the map of Nova Scotia on page 100 while you are reading. Now, read carefully [1] but without interruption the *Prelude* and Section I. Consult the *Notes* for information if necessary, but read chiefly for the story. When you have read all of the section, go back and study it with the help of the *Notes* and the following questions and suggestions: —

What is the use of the *Prelude?* Notice, in Section I, how you are given, first, the surroundings or the geography of the scene; then the village with its ordinary inhabitants; then the chief characters of the story. Does this seem like a good method? Why, or why not? Why does the author give so short a description of Benedict, and so long a description of Evangeline? Can you describe either of them more fully? By means of what details does the author give you a clear idea of Benedict's home? Why mention the chickens and the doves? How does the author lead to the subject of Gabriel? How long have Evangeline and Gabriel known each other? Why does the author give such a long account of their childhood?

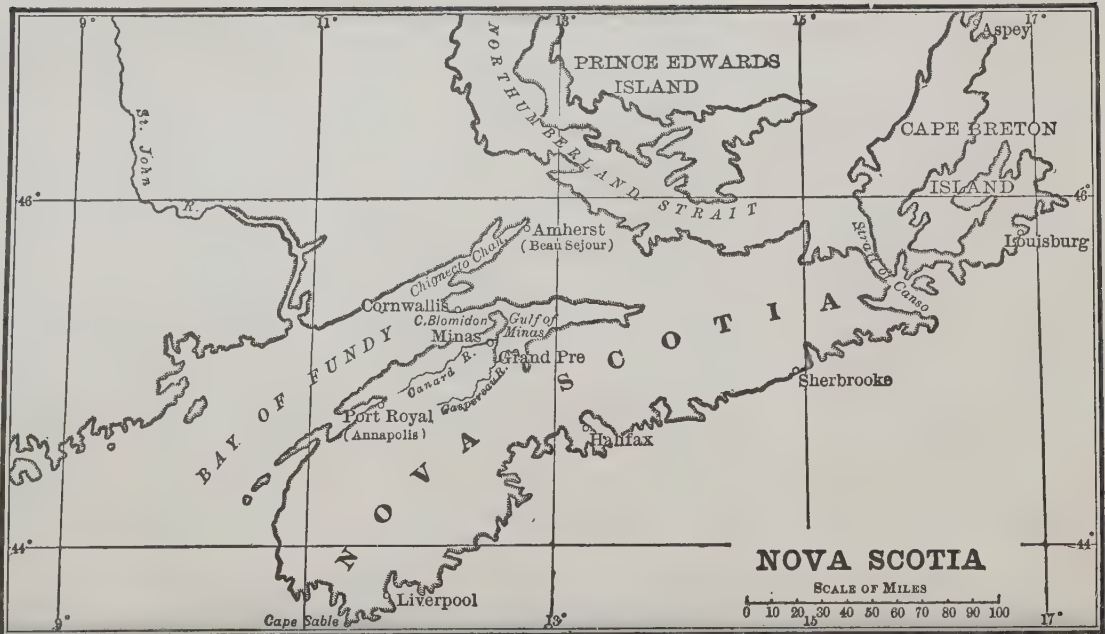
Section II. Read the entire section without stopping. Then read it again, more carefully. Why does the author break the poem up into sections? Why does he give such a long description here? How does he bring out the idea of

[1] The reading ought to be begun in class.

peace in Acadia? What sort of life do the Acadians lead? What is the daily life of Evangeline? By what means does the author bring out the fact that these people are French? What sort of man is Basil the blacksmith? Do you get a clear idea of the appearance and character of Gabriel? Read carefully the conversation between Benedict and Basil. What do you learn from it as to the recent events in Acadia? How does the conversation show the characters of the two men? What is meant by "*the* house and *the* barn"? What do you discover of the marriage customs among the Acadians?

Section III. Read the entire section, consulting the *Notes* as necessary, but not stopping long on any one point. Now, go back to the beginning of the section. What is the notary's errand at Benedict's house? What details make his portrait clear? Find what is said of him in the *Notes*. Do you think that the stories he told the village children were suitable for little people? Does the story about the orphan girl and the statue show the triumph of justice or of injustice? How does this story apply to the ships in the harbor? What *thoughts* were *congealed into the lines* on the face of the blacksmith? Note how in the rest of the section the author emphasizes the peace and confidence of the group, and their prospects of future happiness. What is gained by the descriptions of the moon and the stars?

Section IV. Read the entire section. Then read the remainder of the *Historical Introduction*. What was going on in Grand-Pré? How does the author keep up the idea of contentment? The betrothal among these French people was almost as binding as the marriage. What is meant by *every house was an inn?* Note the contrast between the passage beginning, *Under the open sky*, and that beginning, *So passed the morning away*. What is gained by this contrast? Of what nationality were the guard from the ships? Who was their commander? Remember, in reading this passage, that the people are French; that their language is French; and that the church is Roman Catholic.


9°
11°
13°
15°
17°
46°
44°
PRINCE EDWARDS ISLAND
NORTHUMBERLAND STRAIT
CAPE BRETON ISLAND
Aspey
St. John R.
Amherst (Beau Sejour)
Louisburg
Strait of Canso
Chignecto Chain
Cornwallis
C. Blomidon
Gulf of Minas
Minas
Grand Pre
Canard R.
Gaspereau R.
Sherbrooke
BAY OF FUNDY
NOVA SCOTIA
Port Royal (Annapolis)
Halifax
Liverpool
Cape Sable
NOVA SCOTIA
SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

LOUISIANA
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70
Adayes
Natchitoches
Sabine R.
Sabine L.
Red River
Wachita R.
Opelousas R.
Opelousas
S. Martins
S. Maurs
Teche R.
Atchafalaya R.
Atchafalaya Bay
MARSH
Mississippi
Baton Rouge
Plaquemine
L. Maurepas
Lake Pontchartrain
L. Borgne
New Orleans
ACADIAN COAST
GERMAN COAST
River
Breton Sound
Pearl R.
LOUISIANA
16°
14°
12°
31°
29°

Who is *his Majesty?* Were the orders really from the king? (See page 25.) What did the hearts of the peasants reply when the commander asked them how they had repaid the king's *kindness?* Were the *other lands* to be under the rule of the English? Why does the commander mention the king so often? Was it true that the Acadians had never sworn allegiance to England? What sort of man was Father Felician? Was he right in counseling peace? Did the Acadians really forgive their enemies? Notice how, in this section, the author keeps Evangeline always before you. How does he bring out her character at the end of the section?

Section V. Read the entire section. Notice how the author passes over the four days that the men spent in the church. What boats were the men taken to? Why did they sing as they marched to the shore? How does Evangeline conduct herself? Was it true that *nothing in truth* could harm her and Gabriel? How does Benedict feel about the action of the English? What was likely to be the effect of the difference in language of the captives and the soldiers? How does the author make you feel the confusion and the sadness of the night? What is suggested by Benedict's *vacant stare?* Is this effect on him in keeping with his character? Why did the English burn the houses of the Acadians? Was such action necessary? Was it excusable? How would it make the people feel? What was the cause of Benedict's death? What is suggested by the priest's words, *a happier season?* Did this *happier season* ever come?

PART THE SECOND

Section I. Read the entire section for the story. Then read it again, more carefully. How does the author show the lapse of time? Was it the intention of the English to scatter the Acadians? How do you think the exiles lived? Why did the English not make up the losses of the Acadians and give them a place to live? Note the line in this section in which Evangeline is introduced. Could the

separation of Evangeline and Gabriel take place and continue nowadays? What means have we of uniting people who have been separated by accident? Do you think that Gabriel made any attempt to search out Evangeline? Do you think it good advice that was given in the passage beginning, *Dear child?* How has Evangeline's character been developing during the years of exile? What does the priest mean when he says, *Affection never was wasted?* Is it true? What is meant by the words, *bleeding and barefoot?* Explain the passage beginning, *Let me essay* and ending with *reaches an outlet.*

Section II. Read the entire section. Consult the map of Louisiana on page 101 while you are reading. Many Acadians settled in Louisiana, drawn thither by their feeling of kinship with the French who had long lived there. The descendants of the Acadians still live in Louisiana, where the common people call them "Cajuns." Note the contrast between methods of travel in Evangeline's time and in ours. Did the Acadians make a bad exchange when they came from Nova Scotia to Louisiana? How does the author make you feel the warmth and beauty of this tropical region? The mystery of the swamps and bayous? Note how the author keeps Evangeline always before you. What are her thoughts regarding Gabriel? Why does the oarsman blow his horn? What is meant by the *desert* (line 803)? Read carefully the description of the lakes of Atchafalaya. How does the author make you feel their beauty? In what direction is the *light, swift boat* going? Do you get a clear idea of Gabriel's appearance and his feelings? Compare your knowledge of him with your knowledge of Evangeline: Why this difference? Why was Gabriel *seeking oblivion of self and of sorrow?* Do you think it possible for Evangeline to feel the nearness of Gabriel? What does the priest mean when he says, *Trust to thy heart?* Is it a good method to bring in so much description here?

Section III. Read the entire section. Then read it again, more carefully. Who is the herdsman mentioned in line 891? Can you discover anything about him from the

description of his house? Note the description of the man in lines 913–21. Why do the cattle rush over the prairies? How has Basil prospered in exile? How do you suppose he gained his success? Why does Evangeline not ask about Gabriel? Why has Gabriel's spirit been *tried and troubled* (line 946)? What is Gabriel's errand away from home? What is meant by *the Fates and the streams are against him?* What is meant by *his prison?* Where did we last see Michael the Fiddler? What is his present way of living? Was it true that numberless herds were *his who would take them?* What light does this throw on Basil's prosperity? How is the character of Basil brought out? Notice what he says about the contrast between Nova Scotia and Louisiana. Does he regret leaving Grand-Pré? Note his words, "*No King George.*" Who ruled over Louisiana? You will see later why the fever is mentioned here. Note the contrast between Evangeline's feelings and the feelings of others. Why does she go into the garden? What are her thoughts and feelings (lines 1045–58)? Why does the priest remain at the settlement? What is meant by *the blast of fate?* What is meant by *the day that succeeded?* Is there any good reason why they do not overtake Gabriel?

Section IV. Read the entire section. How does the author make you feel the bigness of the West? What does he show of the vastness and the dangers of the prairie? Why is Gabriel in the Ozark Mountains? Who is with Evangeline? What is gained by the story of the Indian woman? Why does the Indian woman speak of the bridegroom of snow and the phantom lover? What does she mean to suggest? How does she make Evangeline feel (lines 1159–63)? Why does Evangeline go to the Mission? What is meant by *his children?* What was his *native tongue?* Why does Evangeline stay at the Mission? How does the author indicate the passing of time, in this section? What *maidens* are meant in line 1212? What is *this humble plant* (line 1225)? How long would it take Evangeline to get to the Saginaw River? How did she go? Note that lines

1239–51 cover a long period of time. What *army* is mentioned in line 1242?

Section V. Read the entire section. This scene is laid in Philadelphia. What was Evangeline's reason for making her home in that city (lines 1258, 1259)? Why was her search ended (lines 1267, 1268)? What is meant by the lines that say she *saw the world far below her?* What is her character as we see it in this last section? How does she feel about Gabriel? What is her work? Note the year of the pestilence. (See *Notes.*) How long has it been since Evangeline saw Gabriel? Who is *the oppressor* (line 1305)? Why were the streets deserted and silent? What was the *something* that spoke to her? *An old man:* How old would Gabriel be? How is it that Evangeline can recognize him (lines 1351–53)? Re-read slowly and quietly the passage beginning, *Suddenly* (line 1343), through to line 1380. What becomes of Evangeline at the last? Go back and read the *Prelude;* then read the Conclusion. Do you see a good reason for each? Do you think the story well ended?

General suggestions. Sit down quietly and run through the poem from beginning to end, reading a good deal of it, and bearing in mind the story as a whole. Do you see why it has always been so well liked and so much admired? Try to find the right words with which to describe the poem to some one who has not read it. Find the right words to express your idea of Evangeline's character; Father Felician's; Basil's. Pick out seven or eight of the passages you like best, and prepare yourself to read any one of them before the class. Pick out some of the best lines and learn them. Pick out here and there expressions which seem especially beautiful and full of meaning; learn them. Observe that one of the most striking features of the poem is its wealth of imagery; commit to memory the lines containing similes, metaphors, and other figures of speech which impress you as most happily conceived. Other outstanding features are: (1) the accounts of the manners and customs of the Acadian peasants; (2) the descriptions of persons and places, and (3) the many contrasting epi-

sodes and scenes. In the following brief outline of the poem, insert references to your favorite passages relating to these subjects, and to any others which have impressed you as distinguishing the poem.

Remembering that the action of the narrative takes place between September, 1755 (Part the Second opening in May, 1765), and 1793, the year of the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, recall the important events in United States history occurring within this period. In this connection, read sections 125–211 in Thwaite's and Kendall's *History of the United States;* note also the " Recommended Readings " in history, biography, fiction, and poetry listed on page 214 of that book.

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE POEM

PART THE FIRST

I.

(*a*) The Little Village of Grand-Pré (lines 20–57).
(*b*) The farmer and his daughter (lines 58–81).
(*c*) Evangeline's home (lines 82–102).
(*d*) Evangeline's suitors (lines 103–47).

II.

(*a*) An autumn evening (lines 148–217).
(*b*) Benedict and Basil (lines 218–67).

III.

(*a*) The notary (lines 268–329).
(*b*) The marriage contract (lines 330–52).
(*c*) The curfew (lines 353–81).

IV.

(*a*) The betrothal feast (lines 382–419).
(*b*) The gathering at the church (lines 420–59).
(*c*) Father Felician (lines 460–81).
(*d*) The evening service (lines 482–86).
(*e*) The ill tidings spread (lines 487–523).

V.

(*a*) The mournful procession (lines 524–67).
(*b*) The tumult and stir of embarking (lines 568–84).
(*c*) Night on the shore (lines 585–612).
(*d*) The burning of the village (lines 613–35).
(*e*) Benedict's death (lines 636–65).

PART THE SECOND

I.

(*a*) Evangeline begins her search for Gabriel (lines 666–740).

II.

(*a*) Her journey down the Ohio River (lines 741–826).
(*b*) Gabriel's boat passes unseen (lines 827–62).
(*c*) Evangeline is inspired with new hope (lines 863–87).

III.

(*a*) Evangeline and Father Felician find Basil (lines 888–934).
(*b*) Gabriel's errand (lines 935–58).
(*c*) A reunion of old friends (lines 959–1058).
(*d*) Basil and Evangeline follow Gabriel (lines 1059–77).

IV.

(*a*) Gabriel's wanderings (lines 1078–1115).
(*b*) The Indian woman's tale (1116–64).
(*c*) The Jesuit Mission (lines 1165–1235).
(*d*) Evangeline resumes her search alone (lines 1236–51).

V.

(*a*) The Sister of Mercy (lines 1252–97).
(*b*) The pestilence (lines 1298–1319).
(*c*) The finding of Gabriel (1320–80).

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENTS

1. IMAGINE that you are making a visit to Longfellow's home in Cambridge. Starting from Harvard Square, you walk along Brattle Street for about half a mile, the same way that Longfellow must have taken many a day on his way home from the college. The street is wide, and lined with magnificent trees — elms, horse-chestnuts, and pines. You pass the place where the village blacksmith used to have his shop, and beyond it Tory Row, where the ancient houses of the English Royalists are still standing in the midst of velvety lawns and rhododendron hedges. Then you come to the Longfellow house. The poet's daughter, Alice Longfellow, still lives here, but the poet's study is open to visitors at certain times of the day, and it is kept just as it was when he used it. Directly opposite the house is the Longfellow Memorial Park, and midway between the house and Charles River Drive is the Longfellow Memorial. There is a bust of the poet with a bas-relief of the chief characters of his poems — Priscilla, Miles Standish, Evangeline, Hiawatha, and others. With these facts to guide you, write an account of your visit — of the many changes that must have come to Cambridge and Harvard since Longfellow's time,— of your feelings as you pass over the same ground that Longfellow traversed, and see many of the things which he saw — and of the recollections of his poems stirred by your visit to his study.

2. Write an account of an imaginary Sunday afternoon in Longfellow's home when the poet was alive. Bring two or three of his friends to his study, and write their conversation. Perhaps one of them might ask the poet how he came to write *Evangeline*. Imagine Longfellow telling the story.

3. Imagine that you are the little girl who wanted to see Longfellow, and write the conversation first with Luigi

Monti and then with Longfellow himself. Think how astonished and bashful and delighted she must have been when the poet himself came out to see her, and try to show all those feelings in what she says.

4. Imagine yourself a member of one of Longfellow's classes in English. Imagine how these classes seemed to the students who sat at the mahogany table in the Corporation Room and listened to the poet-professor who always treated his students like gentlemen. Describe the recitation and your own feelings toward Longfellow.

5. Write a character sketch of Father Felician as he was in the peaceful days before the exile. Picture him going about his daily duties among his people, and show how they regard him.

6. Write a description of Evangeline's kitchen in Grand-Pré, and show her at work in it churning, or getting dinner, or baking cookies. Try to show by what she does that she is a good housekeeper. Try to show her sweet, kindly nature. If one of the neighborhood children came in, do you think she would make him welcome?

7. Imagine a conversation between Colonel Winslow and his most trusted lieutenant aboard one of the English ships the day before the announcement is made that the Acadians must come to the church to hear the proclamation. Let the two men discuss the expulsion of the Acadians. Make their characters different — one stern, feeling that it is his duty to his country to scatter the Acadian colony, the other tender-hearted and quick to feel the sorrow of the exiles. Try to make the conversation as true to historic facts as possible.

8. Write the conversation between Basil and Gabriel in Louisiana when the young man grows so restless and unhappy that Basil sends him to trade for mules at Adayes.

9. Write an imaginary adventure of Gabriel's with the Indians in the Western forests and prairies. Make it exciting and true to life. You might let Gabriel tell the story himself to the Black Robe chief at the Mission; but if you

do, remember that the man who is really brave is usually modest about it.

10. Imagine that you are Gabriel, and that as you are traveling alone through the wilderness, you meet another trapper cooking his supper over a camp-fire at the fork of some river. He wants to go to the country you have just left, and asks you what route he should take. You tell him how to go, and draw him a rough sketch-map of your travels. Use your geography in planning this composition, and put in all the places where Gabriel went, as far as the poem tells them. Add suggestions of your own. Write the conversation, and draw the map as you think Gabriel might have drawn it.

11. Describe Evangeline at her work among the poor in Philadelphia before she found Gabriel. She was doing much the same kind of work that the visiting nurses are doing in the cities to-day. Follow her all of one morning, and tell what you see.

NOTES

LINE

1 **the forest primeval:** A forest in its natural state, untouched by the axe.

3 **Druids:** The priests of the early inhabitants of England. These tribes considered the oak tree particularly sacred.

3 **eld:** Olden times.

20 **Acadian:** The name *Acadie* or *Acadia* was of Indian origin. Acadia was colonized by France in 1604, and ceded to Great Britain in 1713. The French settlers were carried away in 1755.

21 **Grand-Pre:** The name is French. It means *Great Meadow.*

24 **dikes:** Embankments to keep out the ocean.

29 **Blomidon:** A rough, towering headland of rock at the entrance of the Basin of Minas.

34 **Normandy:** A province in northeastern France.

34 **the Henries:** French kings — Henry III and Henry IV — who reigned from 1574 to 1610.

35 **dormer-windows:** Windows with gables, rising from a sloping roof.

39 **kirtles:** Skirts and jackets.

49 **Angelus:** The ringing of a bell at morning, noon, and night, in remembrance of the visit of the angel to the Virgin Mary.

62 **stalworth:** Stalwart, or strong. The word meant, originally, *good at stealing.*

72 **hyssop:** A plant mentioned in the Old Testament as being used for the sprinkling of the blood of a sacrifice (Exod. XII, 22), or holy water.

74 **missal:** The Roman Catholic mass-book.

87 **penthouse:** A small projecting roof, usually over a door.

93 **wains:** Heavy wagons.

93 **antique:** The accent is here on the first syllable.

94 **seraglio:** The apartment where the wives of a sultan are kept.

96 **Peter:** See Mark XIV, 29, 30, and 66–72, for the story of Peter's denial of his friendship with Jesus.

LINE

102 **mutation:** Change. Is the word a good one here?

111 **Patron Saint:** A saint regarded as the special protector of some person or place.

122 **plain-song:** Simple, old-fashioned monotonous music, formerly used in churches.

139 **that stone:** In an old French fable we are told that if one of a swallow's brood is blind, the mother seeks on the sea-shore a pebble with which she restores the sight of the young bird. The stone was supposed to bring great luck to the person who found it.

144 **Saint Eulalie:** An old French proverb says that if the sun shines on Saint Eulalie's Day (February 12), there will be plenty of apples.

149 **Scorpion:** The eighth sign of the zodiac, which the sun enters late in October.

153 **Jacob:** For the story of Jacob and the angel see Gen. xxxii, 24–29.

159 **Summer of All-Saints:** Our Indian Summer. All-Saints' Day is November 1.

170 **plane-tree:** There is a story that Xerxes, the Persian king, once found a plane-tree so beautiful that he dressed it in fine robes and valuable jewels.

172 **its burden and heat:** A quotation from the Bible, — Matt. xx, 12.

188 **fetlocks:** Tufts of hair above a horse's hoofs.

209 **Norman orchards:** Orchards of Normandy, in France.

209 **Burgundian:** Burgundy was a province in eastern France, noted for its grapes and wine.

237 **English ships:** The ships that had brought the troops under the command of Colonel Winslow.

238 **Gaspereau:** A river flowing into the Basin of Minas. See map on page 100.

240 **his Majesty's mandate:** The command of King George II of England. He ruled from 1727 to 1760. Had he really issued an order for the removal of the Acadians?

249 **Louisburg:** A fort on Cape Breton Island (see map) built by the French, but taken by the English in 1745.

249 **Beau Séjour:** A French fort north of the Basin of Minas, captured by the English in 1755.

249 **Port Royal:** See map; captured by the English in 1710.

261 **glebe:** Turf.

LINE

263 **René Leblanc:** A real person. In a petition to the king, made many years later, it is stated of Leblanc that he was put ashore in New York with his wife and only two of his twenty children.

267 **notary:** An officer who makes out contracts and takes the oaths of parties entering into an agreement.

275 **the war:** Perhaps King George's War between the French and English, 1744–48; or possibly the much earlier war of Queen Anne, 1702–13.

280 **Loup-garou:** A were-wolf, or man who (either through his own will or through enchantment) is supposed to become a wolf and devour children.

284 **the oxen:** It is an old belief that at midnight on Christmas Eve, the oxen fall on their knees and worship the child Jesus.

306 **an ancient city:** Florence, in Italy.

335 **dower:** The money or property that a woman receives from her people when she marries.

337 **the great seal:** The official seal or impression made on wax or on a round gilded wafer pasted upon a document.

344 **draught-board:** Checker-board.

354 **curfew:** The word means *cover-fire*. The bell that warns people to put out their lights and go to bed.

381 **Ishmael:** Ishmael and his mother, Hagar, were driven out of the tents of Abraham, and wandered in the desert. Gen. xxi, 9–21.

413 **Tous les Bourgeois:** *The Burgers of Chartres*, and *The Chimes of Dunkirk*, — old French songs.

430 **their commander:** Colonel Winslow.

456 **never . . . sworn . . . allegiance:** See page 24.

466 **tocsin's alarum:** The tocsin was an alarm-bell or loud drum-beat to rouse a town or an army. *Alarum* is our word *alarm*.

472 **Prince of Peace:** Christ.

484 **Ave Maria:** Hail Mary; a prayer to the Virgin Mary.

486 **Elijah:** The prophet Elijah was caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire. 2 Kings ii, 11–12.

498 **ambrosial:** Very sweet and delicious. Ambrosia, in the Greek myths, was the food of the gods.

507 **the Prophet:** When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, after talking with God, his face shone so brightly that the children of Israel were afraid of him. He had to cover his

LINE

face while he spoke to them. Exod. xxiv, 12–18; xxxiv, 28–35.

575 **refluent:** Flowing back; ebbing.

579 **leaguer:** The camp of an army besieging a city.

597 **Paul:** The Apostle Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Melita. Acts xxviii, 1, 2.

605 **Benedicite:** Bless you. A Latin greeting used by priests.

615 **Titan-like:** In Greek mythology the Titans were giants, the sons and daughters of Heaven and Earth. Briareus, the hundred-handed monster, was son of the same parents.

621 **gleeds:** Burning coals.

657 **bell or book:** Tolling bell; the service-book of the church.

672 **Newfoundland:** The accent here is on the second syllable. The usual pronunciation is *New' fund land.*

674 **savannas:** Low level prairies.

677 **mammoth:** The huge hairy elephant of prehistoric times.

705 **coureurs-des-bois:** In French, this means *runners-of-the-woods.* Hunters and trappers in North America.

707 **voyageur:** A boatman; usually one who carried supplies from one trading-post to another.

713 **Saint Catherine's tresses:** Saint Catherine of Siena, in Italy (1347–80) vowed never to marry. Hence to *braid Saint Catherine's tresses* is to lead a single life.

732 **shards:** Sharp pieces of broken pottery.

733 **O Muse:** The author here follows the example of Greek and Latin authors, who called on the Spirit of Poetry to help them.

741 **Beautiful River:** The Ohio.

750 **Opelousas:** In Louisiana. A great many Acadians settled on both sides of the southern Mississippi. This region is still called the Acadian Coast.

755 **chutes:** Narrow channels with rushing currents.

766 **Plaquemine:** A large bayou not far south of Baton Rouge.

769 **tenebrous:** Dark.

782 **shrinking mimosa:** The sensitive plant; its leaves close at a touch or jar.

807 **Atchafalaya:** A river in Louisiana.

816 **Wachita:** The name of a river in Arkansas and Louisiana.

819 **cope:** The head or top.

821 **ladder of Jacob:** Jacob saw the angels ascending to heaven on a ladder in the clouds. Gen. xxviii, 10–12.

LINE

842 **tholes:** Pins that support the oars of a rowboat.

856 **Têche:** Bayou Têche.

858 **pastor:** In Latin the word means *shepherd.*

878 **Bacchantes:** In Greek myths, those who worshiped Bacchus (the god of wine) with wild songs and dances.

890 **Yule-tide:** Christmas. The Druids considered the mistletoe sacred.

914 **sombrero:** The Spanish word for *hat;* usually a wide-brimmed hat.

952 **Adayes:** A town in northwestern Louisiana, ten miles from Natchitoches.

953 **Ozarks:** Mountains in Arkansas and Missouri.

961 **Olympus:** The mountain in Greece on which the gods were supposed to live.

970 **ci-devant:** A French word meaning *former.*

971 **patriarchal:** Like a dignified old man who rules over a large family.

984 **Natchitoches:** A parish in Louisiana. The word is pronounced *nă' ke tosh,* but the meter suggests that Longfellow pronounced it as it is spelled — *natch i tō' ches.*

1009 **Creoles:** Descendants of the French and Spanish settlers of Louisiana.

1033 **Carthusian:** A monk of the severe order founded by Saint Bruno in 1086. The chief monastery of the order is in the Swiss Valley of the Chartreuse — hence the name. The Carthusians keep almost complete silence.

1044 **Upharsin:** The last word of the message that King Belshazzar saw written on the wall. Dan. v, 25–28.

1057 **oracular:** As if coming from an oracle, or person through whom the gods were supposed to speak.

1060 **with their tears:** The reference is to the Magdalen's bathing the feet of Jesus. Luke vii, 36–38.

1063 **Prodigal Son:** Luke xv, 11–24.

1064 **Foolish Virgin:** Matthew xxv, 1–12.

1082 **Oregon:** The old name for the Columbia River.

1082 **Walleway:** In northwestern Oregon.

1082 **Owyhee:** A river in Idaho, flowing into the Snake River in Oregon.

1083 **Wind-River Mountains:** In Wyoming.

1084 **Sweet-water:** A mountain range of the Rockies, in Wyoming.

INE

085 **Fontaine-qui-bout:** A creek emptying into the Arkansas at Pueblo, Colorado. The name means, in French, *boiling spring.*

085 **sierras:** Mountain chains; from the Spanish word *sierra, a saw.*

091 **amorphas:** Wild bean plants, covered with purple flowers.

095 **Ishmael's children:** This probably refers to the passage in the Bible (Gen. xvi, 12): "He [Ishmael] will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Longfellow is speaking of the Indians.

102 **anchorite:** A hermit.

114 **Fata Morgana:** An Italian word for the mirage; lakes and rivers appear in the sky, and then disappear again.

119 **Shawnee:** A tribe of Algonquin Indians.

120 **Camanches:** The Comanche Indians, in Wyoming.

167 **Black Robe chief:** A Catholic missionary.

175 **Jesuit:** A member of the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus, founded by Ignatius Loyola, in 1534.

181 **vespers:** Evening service.

182 **susurrus:** Pronounced *su sur'us.* Murmuring.

219 **compass-flower:** The compass plant, found on the prairies. The lower leaves turn their edges to north and south.

226 **asphodel:** In Greek story, the white flowers of the dead.

226 **nepenthe:** A drink that dulls sorrow.

233 **Saginaw River:** In Michigan.

241 **Tents of Grace:** A name for the dwellings of the Moravians, a Christian sect founded by the disciples of John Huss, in Germany, 1722. The Moravians were quiet pious people.

253 **sylvan shades:** Pennsylvania (Penn's Woods).

256 **names of the trees:** Many of the streets of Philadelphia are named for trees, as Chestnut, Walnut, Locust, Spruce, Pine, etc.

257 **Dryads:** In Greek mythology, the spirits of the trees.

298 **a pestilence:** In 1793 there was a terrible epidemic of yellow fever in Philadelphia.

312 **the poor:** Words spoken by Jesus: John xii, 3–8.

328 **the Swedes:** The Swedes, as early as 1698, began a church at Wicaco, now inside the city limits of Philadelphia.

355 **like the Hebrew:** The Hebrews marked their door-posts with the blood of a lamb so that the Angel of Death might pass the house without stopping. Exod. xii, 3, 6, 7, 12, 13.

391 **another race:** The English settlers.

PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY

The diacritical marks given below are those found in Webster's New International Dictionary. Note that the pronunciation of French words can be given only approximately by means of signs and English equivalents.

EXPLANATION OF MARKS

A Dash (¯) above the vowel denotes the long sound.
A Curve (˘) above the vowel denotes the short sound.
A Circumflex Accent (^) above the vowels a or u denotes the sound of a in câre or of u in tûrn; above the vowel o it denotes the sound of o in ôrb.
A Dot (˙) above the vowel a denotes the sound of a in pȧst.
A Double Dot (¨) above the vowel a denotes the sound of a in stär.
A Double Dot (¸¸) below the vowel u denotes the sound of u in tru̯e.
A Wave (~) above the vowel e denotes the sound of e in hẽr.

s̱ sounds like z.
ç sounds like s.
ġ sounds like j.
ā̇, ē̇, ō̇ are similar in sound to ā, ē, ō, but are not pronounced so long.

Abbé Guillaume Thomas Francis Raynal (ăb-bā′ gē-yōm′, etc.).
Acadie (ä-kä-dē′).
Accadia (ăc-cā′dĭ-ȧ).
Adayes (ä-dā′yez).
Aelian (ē′lĭ-ăn).
Aix-la-Chapelle (āks-lä-shä-pĕl′).
Amorphas (ȧ-môr′fȧz).
Angelus Domini (ăn′jē̇-lŭs dŏm′ĭ-nī)
Arcadia (är-cā′dĭ-ȧ).
asphodel (ăs′fō̇-dĕl).
Atchafalaya (ăch-ȧ-fȧ-lī′ȧ).
Attakapas (ăt-tŭk′ȧ-paw).
Ave Maria (ä′vē mä-rē′ȧ).

Bacchantes (băk-kăn′tēz).
Bacchus (băk′ŭs).
Basil (băz′il).
bayou (bī′ōō).
Beau Sejour (bō sā-zhōōr′).
belles lettres (bĕl lĕtr′).
Benedicite (bĕn-ē-dĭs′ĭ-tē).
Benedict Bellefontaine (bĕn′ē-dĭct bĕl-fŏn-tān′).
Blomidon (blŏm′ĭ-dŏn).
Bowdoin (bō′dn).
Briareus (brī′ȧ-rūs).
Bruges (bru̯zh).
Burgundian (bûr-gŭn′dĭ-ȧn).

Cadie (cä-diē′).
Camanches (că-măn′chēz).
Canard (căn-ärd′).
Cape Breton (kāp brĕt′un).
Carthusian (kär-thū′zhan).
Celtic (çĕl′tĭc).
Charente Inferieur (shăr-änht′ ănh-f rē-ẽr′).
Charnisay (shär-nĭ-zā′).
Chartreuse (shar-trĕhz′).
Chartreux (shär-trẽ′).
ci-devant (sē-dẽ-vänh′).
Contes Populaires (kôhnt pŏp-u̯-lâr′).
coplas (kōp′laz).
Cotelle (kō tĕl′).
coureurs-des-bois (kōō′rẽr-dā-bwä).
couvre-feu (kōō′vr-fĕ).
Craigie (crā′ghē).
Creole (crē′ōl).

Dante (dăn′tē).
Divina Commedia (dĭ-ve′nȧ cŏm-m dĭ-ȧ).
dryad (drī′ăd).
Ducauroi (du̯-kō-rwä′).

Elijah (ē-lī′jä).
Eulalie (yew-lā′lē).
Evangeline (ē-văn′gĕ-lĭn).

Fata Morgana (fä′tȧ môr-gä′nȧ).
Father Felician (fē̇-lĭsh′yȧn).
Fontaine-qui-bout (fônh′tān kē-bōō).

Gabriel Lajeunesse (lä-zhẽ-nĕs).
Gaspereau (gäs-pẽ-rō′).

Hayarre (gī-ä-rä′).
Hnadenhutten (gnä-dĕn-hu̯t′ĕn).
Hrand-Pré (gränh-prā′).

Hagar (hā′gr).
Haliburton (hăl′ĭ-bûr-tn).
Herodotus (hē-rŏd′ō-tŭs).
Hiawatha (hī-a-wō′thä).
Horace (hor′es).
Horae Hellenicae (hō′rē hĕl-lĕn′ĭ-sē).
Hyperion (hī-pē′rĭ-on).

Isaac de Razilli (dē rä-zē-yē′).
Ishmael (ĭsh′mā-el).

Jesuit (jĕz-yū-ĭt′).

Kavanagh (kăv′a-ná).

La Cle du Caveau (lä klā du̯ kä-vō′).
La Gazza Ladra (lä gät′zä lä′drä).
La Have (lä häve).
La Salle (lä säl).
Leblanc (luh blank).
Le Carillon de Dunquerque (luh kăr-ē-yônh′ dē dun-kĕrk′).
Letiche (lā-tēsh′).
Lilinau (lē′lĭ-nō).
Louisburg (lōō′ĭ-bûrg).
Loup-garou (lōō-gär-ōō′).
Loyola (lō-yō′lä).
Luigi Monti (lōō-ē′jē mŏn′tē).

Maitre de chapelle (mā′tre dē shä-pĕl′).
Manrique (măn-rē′kā).
Melita (mĕ-lē′ta).
Minas Basin (mē′nás).
Moravian (mō-rā′vĭ-an).
Morituri salutamus (mor-ĭ-tū′rē să-lu-tā′mus).
Mowis (mō′wēs).

Natchitoches (năck′ē-tŏsh).
Nepenthe (nē-pĕn′thē).
Normandy (nor′măn-dĭ).

Olympus (ō-lĭm′pŭs).
Opelousas (ŏp-ē-lōō′sás).
Outre-Mer (ōōtr-mâr′).

Owyhee (ō-wī′hē).
Ozark (ō′zärk).

Passamaquoddy (păs-a-ma-kwŏd′ē).
Pierre Capelle (pē-âr′ kă-pĕl′).
Pisiquid (pĭs′ĭ-kwĭd).
Plaquemine (plăk-mēn′).
Pluquet (plu̯-kā′).
Pointe Coupee (pwănht kōō-pā′).
Poitou (pwä-tōō′).

Rene (rē-nā′).
Rochelle (rō-shĕll′).
Rossini (rŏs-sē′nē).

Saginaw (săg′ĭ-naw).
Saint Maur (sănh mōr′).
Saintonge (sănh-tônhzh′).
Samson Agonistes (săm′sŏn ă-gŏn-ĭs′tēz).
seraglio (sẹ-räl′yō).
Shawnee (shô-nē′).
Siena (sē-ā′ná).
Sierras (sē-ĕr′räz).
signor (sē′nyōr).
Sinai (sī′nī or sī′nā-ī).
sombrero (sŏm-brā′rō).
Straits of Messina (mĕs-sē′ná).

Têche (tāsh).
tenebrous (tĕn′ē-brŭs).
Titan (tī′tn).
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres (tōō lā bōōr-zhwä dē shär′tr).

Ultima Thule (ŭl′tē-mä thū′lē).
Upharsin (ū-fär′sĭn).
Utrecht (ū′trĕkt).

Vendee (vänh-dā).
voyageur (vwä-yä-zhẽr′).

Wachita (wŏsh′ẹ-taw).
Walleway (wŏll′ẹ-wā).
were wolf (wēr′ wolf).
Wicaco (wē-kä′kō).
Worcester (wōō′ster).

Xerxes (zẽrks′ēz).

The Riverside Literature Series

SNOW-BOUND
AMONG THE HILLS
SONGS OF LABOR
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

WITH SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS
AN INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES
AND QUESTIONS

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · DALLAS
SAN FRANCISCO
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U . S . A

CONTENTS

Suggestions to the Teacher v
An Introduction to John Greenleaf Whittier . xiii
Proem 1
Snow-Bound: A Winter Idyl 3
Among the Hills 23
Songs of Labor — 38
Dedication 38
The Shoemakers 40
The Fishermen 42
The Lumbermen 44
The Ship-Builders 49
The Drovers 51
The Huskers 54
The Corn-Song 57
The Barefoot Boy 58
My Playmate 61
Telling the Bees 63
The Poet and the Children 65
Burns 66
Abraham Davenport 70
The Poor Voter on Election Day 72
The Gift of Tritemius 73
King Solomon and the Ants 74
How the Robin came 76
April 78
The Mayflowers 79
For an Autumn Festival 80
The Frost Spirit 82
The Last Walk in Autumn 83
The Eternal Goodness 91
Notes and Questions 94

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER[1]

Right and wrong methods. There are two ways to get the most out of a classic; in one, the teacher brings out the meaning for the class by continual explanation; in the other, he puts his wits to work to induce the students themselves to find what is in it.

A working basis. This partial outline of what pupils should learn to do in studying *Snow-Bound* will be found helpful to teachers in planning and guiding the study of a poem: —

1. To know the writer and the times; i.e., *to develop breadth of view.*
2. To like the classic; i.e., *to develop appreciation.*
3. To master details; i.e., *to develop full understanding, scholarship.*
4. To develop initiative; i.e., *by individual work described below.*
5. To get a wealth of ideas; i.e., *by poring over the poem, and by memorizing.*
6. To arouse other ideas; i.e., *by connotation.*
7. To train judgment; i.e., *by comparison of characters, other poems; analysis.*
8. To visualize, to develop imagination; i.e., *by the study of pictures.*
9. To deepen the emotional nature; i.e., *by arousing feeling.*

The laboratory method in English. The old-fashioned plan in teaching literature was to cram into the mind of the child a bulk of information about the author and the poem. The old-time method taught all about a classic, but not once demanded that teacher and pupil together go straight to the classic and ask the poet what he meant. The better method in English work is the laboratory method; it implies (1) ac-

[1] Based upon a portion of Chapter IV of Bolenius's *Teaching Literature in the Grammar Grades and High School.* (Riverside Textbooks in Education. Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.)

tual contact with the subject studied, and (2) conclusions based on personal investigation.

Pupils ought to do considerable individual work of this sort. Hold them responsible for certain definite preparation, like looking up unusual words in the dictionary, keeping an outline of the story, and noting the characters.

Let them make reports on (1) the poet's introduction of local color; (2) on the opinions expressed by the poet; (3) on the connotation of the poet's words and phrases. (Training in connotation will do much to develop appreciation.)

Whittier's life and surroundings. A Whittier atmosphere should be created. This can be done, first of all, by the use of pictures. Then, in taking up the life of the poet, have the students outline the facts from a history of American literature, and give the main points in "one-minute talks." Or draw out by questions the most dramatic or the most vitally important moments of his life. There is much in the biography of Whittier to encourage the country boy.

The sketch of Whittier on pages xiii–xviii of this book is intended to be read by the pupils themselves. It is written especially for this use.

Subjects of Whittier's poems. The question, "What would such a man be most likely to write about?" will bring a quick response.

Before beginning the poem, invite the pupils to prove their statements. Some of the replies will probably be much as follows: —

Whittier's subjects	*Illustrative poems*
Country life.	The Barefoot Boy; The Corn Song
Nature.	April, The Mayflowers.
Childhood.	My Playmate.
Working people.	Songs of Labor.
New England traditions.	Abraham Davenport.
Religion.	The Eternal Goodness.
Death.	Telling the Bees.

Reading Snow-Bound. *Snow-Bound* should be studied by paragraphs. A paragraph should be read through and a title given to it before the detailed study is begun. The giving of titles to the paragraphs is an important feature of the work

for it teaches pupils to look at the paragraph in the large, as a whole. The titles to the first three paragraphs, for example, may be: —

I. Omens of the storm (lines 1–18); II. The evening chores (lines 19–30) and the coming of the snow (lines 31–40); III. The transformation in the morning (lines 41–65). After the title has been assigned, the detailed study of the meaning of the lines is to be taken up, and after this the oral reading. Oral reading should never precede but always follow the interpretation.

During the reading, a few details about the characters in the *Snow-Bound* farmhouse add to the zest of the poem. The father died when Whittier was twenty-three; the mother lived long. Uncle Moses Whittier, the father's younger brother (unmarried), and the unmarried aunt lived with them. The brother is Matthew. The elder sister is Mary, who sent off Whittier's first poem; the younger sister later kept house. The district schoolmaster boarded with them. Harriet Livermore, daughter of Judge Livermore, of New Hampshire, boarded at Rocks Village, two miles away. In the poem she is the "half-welcome guest."

The lesson should consist of study *of* the poem, not study *about* it. From the outline or synopsis, that the pupils make for themselves, it is easy for them to pick out the purely narrative portions; the purely descriptive; and the lyrical, which voice personal opinion and feeling. The narrative-lyric nature of the poem is readily seen. The meaning of the word *idyl* is better understood. Over four hundred words should be discussed and thoroughly ground into the vocabulary of the pupil. Allusions must be explained. Draw the meanings from the class, if possible, instead of telling them yourself. Poetry is meant, primarily, to be read aloud; therefore, read it yourself — and have pupils read it — with full expression. Call for explanation, as you proceed. Let pupils memorize the parts that appeal to them. Let them discover the qualities of style for themselves. Lead them to visualize the portraits and the scenes, and to understand the other passages. Since they have taught themselves largely

by investigation and thought in class, they will lay aside the book with understanding and respect. Such a combination makes for the best appreciation.

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN EXERCISES

1. Winter Evening Occupations and Amusements in Whittier's Childhood.
2. Whittier's Parents and their Fireside Stories.
3. Whittier's Sisters.
4. Character Sketch of Whittier's Uncle.
5. A Comparison between the Nature of Whittier's Aunt and of his Uncle.
6. The Country Schoolmaster.

These sketches should be of from one hundred to three hundred words. The outlines for them should be made or reviewed in the class before the sketches are written, in order that the teacher may see that they are complete. A sketch of Whittier's mother, for example, should answer all of the following questions: —

What sort of woman was Whittier's mother?

How was she occupied while telling her fireside stories?

How does Whittier express his appreciation of her stories?

Where did she find the inspiration for the tales she told?

What different kinds of tales could she produce for her children's entertainment?

How did she show her spirit of helpfulness to every one?

MATERIAL FOR VITALIZING CLASS WORK

Biographical material. The following books furnish excellent biographical material: **Carpenter:** *John Greenleaf Whittier* (*American Men of Letters Series*); **Claflin:** *Personal Recollections of John Greenleaf Whittier;* **Fields:** *Whittier: Notes on his Life and his Friendships;* **Pickard:** *Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier* (2 vols.).

Illustrative material. To illustrate Whittier's life, pictures ke the following are good: **Perry Pictures:** numbers 25, 26, , 27b, 28, 29.

Critical material. For a criticism of the poet's work, the llowing books will prove stimulating: **Lowell:** *A Fable for ritics* (lines 242–303, elementary); **Pattee:** *A History of merican Literature* (pp. 333–44); **Richardson:** *American iterature* (pp. 173–86); **Stedman:** *Poets of America* (pp. 95–3); **Trent:** *A History of American Literature* (pp. 408–19); **endell:** *A Literary History of America* (pp. 358–70); **Hig-nson and Boynton:** *Reader's History of American Litera-re* (pp. 146–53).

ADDITIONAL READING

The following poems are not included in this collection, eferences are given to other R.L.S. issues which contain y of these.

I. *Narrative and Legendary Poems.* The Vaudois Teacher Barclay of Ury (*R.L.S.* 5) — The Angels of Buena Vista *R.L.S.* 5, 239) — Maud Muller (*R.L.S.* 5, 175, 239, G) — ipper Ireson's Ride (*R.L.S.* 5, 175, G) — The Pipes at ucknow (*R.L.S.* 5, 239) — Marguerite (*R.L.S.* 239) — he Swan Song of Parson Avery (*R.L.S.* 41) — Amy Went-orth — The Wreck of Rivermouth (*R.L.S.* 41).

II. *Poems of Nature.* Sunset on the Bearcamp — Summer the Lakeside — The River Path (*R.L.S.* G) — The railing Arbutus.

III. *Subjective and Reminiscent Poems.* In School Days *R.L.S.* 5, 175, 239) — Memories — The New Year (*R.L.S.*

IV. *Religious Poems.* Our Master — My Psalm (*R.L.S.* 5) — At Last (*R.L.S.* 175).

V. *Personal Poems.* Bryant on his Birthday (*R.L.S.* G) Our Autocrat [Holmes] — O. W. Holmes on his Eightieth rthday — James Russell Lowell — To William Lloyd arrison.

VI. *Anti-slavery Poems.* Randolph of Roanoke (*R.L.S.*

175) — Massachusetts to Virginia (*R.L.S.* 175) Ichabo
(*R.L.S.* 175) — The Lost Occasion (*R.L.S.* 175).

VII. *Poems of The Civil War.* Waiting — The Watcher
— Barbara Frietchie (*R.L.S.* 5, 175, G) — Laus De
(*R.L.S.* 5, 175).

EDITIONS FOR SCHOOL USE

Complete Poetical Works. *Student's Cambridge Edition*
With a biographical sketch, notes, and indexes to titles and first lines.

In the Riverside Literature Series

A Sketch of Whittier's Life. No. 175. By Bliss Perry, Professor of English Literature in Harvard University. With twenty autobiographical and other poems by Whittier. With two portraits.

Whittier Leaflets. No. G. Forty complete poems and selected prose passages from the works of John Greenlea Whittier. With an introduction, a biographical sketch and illustrations.

Mabel Martin, and Other Poems. No. 5. A collection o eighteen poems. With a biographical sketch, and introductory and explanatory notes.

Snow-Bound, Among the Hills, Songs of Labor and Othe Poems. No. 4. A collection of twenty-seven poems. Wit suggestions to teachers, an introduction, notes and questions, illustrations and a map.

The Tent on the Beach, and Associated Poems. No. 4 A collection of nineteen poems. With introductory an explanatory notes, and map.

CHRONOLOGY OF WHITTIER'S LIFE AND WORKS

1807. Whittier born, December 17.
1829–32. Newspaper editor in Boston, Haverhill, and Hartfor
1831. Legends of New England. (Prose and Verse.)
1832. Moll Pitcher.

1833. Delegate to the anti-slavery convention in Philadelphia.
Justice and Expediency. (Prose.)
1835–36. Member of the Massachusetts Legislature.
1836. Settled in Amesbury.
1837. Poems written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the years 1830 and 1836.
1838. Poems.
1838–40. Edited *The Pennsylvania Freeman.*
1843. Lays of My Home, and Other Poems.
1844. Miscellaneous Poems.
1845. The Stranger in Lowell. (Prose.)
1846. Voices of Freedom.
1847. The Supernaturalism of New England. (Prose.)
1847–59. Leading writer for the *National Era*, of Washington, D.C.
1849. Poems. (A collection of Whittier's poems against Slavery.)
Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal. (Prose.)
1850. Songs of Labor, and Other Poems.
Old Portraits and Modern Sketches. (Prose.)
1853. The Chapel of the Hermits, and Other Poems.
A Sabbath Scene: A Sketch of Slavery in Verse.
1854. Literary Recreations and Miscellanies. (Prose.)
1856. The Panorama, and Other Poems.
1857. The Sycamores.
Atlantic Monthly established. Whittier a frequent contributor.
1860. Presidential Elector for Massachusetts.
Home Ballads, Poems, and Lyrics.
1863. In War Time, and Other Poems.
1864. Presidential Elector for Massachusetts.
1866. Snow-Bound.
Prose Works. (Collected.)
1867. National Lyrics.
The Tent on the Beach, and Other Poems.
1869. Among the Hills, and Other Poems.
1870. Ballads of New England.
Two Letters on the Present Aspect of the Society of Friends.
1871. Miriam, and Other Poems.
1872. The Pennsylvania Pilgrim, and Other Poems.
1874. Mabel Martin, and Other Poems.

1875. Hazel Blossoms.
1878. Vision of Echard, and Other Poems.
1881. The King's Missive, and Other Poems.
1883. The Bay of Seven Islands, and Other Poems.
1886. Poems of Nature.
Saint Gregory's Guest, and Recent Poems.
1892. At Sundown.
Whittier died, September 7.

AN INTRODUCTION TO
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

It stands there still, the old homestead, just as it stood that brief December day." There is the long, low house with slanting roof and huge stone chimney up the middle. There is the round well-curb beneath its booming sweep. The bridle-post, a big stone with projecting step, still keeps its seat at the garden gate. And over the way still stands the barn — the big new barn that held the treasures of the Whittier farm. It is a lonely spot, as lonely still as can be found, perhaps, in any busy county of New England. It lies in what is called the East Parish of Haverhill, in the valley of the Merrimac.

The homestead and the family

Planted here, with not a neighbor roof in sight, where

> no social smoke
> Curled over woods of snow-hung oak,

five generations of Whittiers had taken up, each in its turn, the work of the farm; and each in its turn, on long winter evenings, had sat around the homestead hearth. In John Greenleaf Whittier's boyhood, there were, besides his father and mother, his aunt Mercy and uncle Moses, and his own young brother Matthew and two sisters — Mary, older than himself, and Elizabeth, the youngest of them all.

The Whittiers were strict Quakers, as had been every Whittier beneath that roof. They used the gentle "thee" and "thy" of Quaker speech, eschewed all vanities, and dressed in homespun of sober Quaker gray. Every "First day" they drove to the meeting of the Society of Friends at Amesbury, and that was about as much of the wide wide world as John Greenleaf knew up to his fifteenth year. Then something happened that ever after he looked back upon as one of the greatest events of his life.

That was the coming of a poet into the house — not a poet, flesh and blood, in coat and breeches, but the mind and the soul of a poet alive forever in his book. And that poet was a Scotch farmer named Robert Burns. He was very properly introduced, too, being brought in by the schoolmaster himself. Joshua Coffin, teacher of the district school, fresh from Dartmouth College and full of life and fun, used often to come around of an evening, bringing a book to read aloud — a book of travel and adventure, usually; but this particular night, the poems. And he sat down and read page after page, explaining the Scottish dialect as he went. Greenleaf Whittier sat spellbound, listening. He was finding out, that night, another world, or another way of looking at this one, which is quite the same thing, after all. He was still rapt in his vision when the reading stopped and the master, rising, offered to leave the book, if he liked it. Did he like it? He took it out into the hayfield in the morning, he carried it with him all that day and the next, he read it to himself, he read it aloud, he read it to the dog and the brook and the birds; and if the mows in the new barn waited longer that summer for the yield of the early mowing, the fault must be laid to Robert Burns.

The poet Burns

But the work of the farm had to go on, and his hand was needed with the rest; for only by "all hands to" could the stubborn soil be made to yield a livelihood. But he thought of Burns, the Scottish farmer, and the songs he made behind the plough.

> And daily life and duty seemed
> No longer poor and common.
> . . . . . .
> I saw through all familiar things
> The romance underlying;
> The joys and griefs that plume the wings
> Of Fancy skyward flying.

In short, John Greenleaf Whittier, with an inborn love of rhyming, was beginning to find that he himself was something of a poet, too.

One day, five years later, Whittier was standing by the roadside, helping his father mend a stone wall, when the

postman, riding by on horseback, tossed over to them the weekly paper. What was Whittier's surprise when he opened it, to find in its "Poet's Corner" some verses of his own, signed "W."—his sister Mary had filched the poem and sent it off. The paper was a small sheet edited at Newburyport by William Lloyd Garrison, who was only two years older than Whittier. And the sequel of the story was that the young editor drove out himself to hunt up the young poet (and found the young poet flat on his stomach hunting up a hen's nest under the barn), and that Friend Whittier was urged to release his son from the farmwork and send him to an academy. "Sir," he sternly replied, "poetry will not give him bread!" But as Whittier was not very strong, he had permission to go, if he could pay his own way. And this he did, by making slippers, and bookkeeping, and teaching in vacation time.

Whittier's first poem is printed

There is a good old Eastern proverb that says, "Square thyself for use. The stone that will fit in the wall is not left in the way." By the end of Whittier's school days it was time for him to choose what he would do. He had written many verses, and many of them had been published; but verses were not paid for. He might make a good cobbler, for whom surely there is always much use in the world. But he had "squared" himself for yet a better use, and fate picked him up to mend the understanding of his fellows in yet a better way.

If we were to follow Whittier through the next twelve years, we should find ourselves in first one New England town and then another, or going by stagecoach and boat to New York or Philadelphia; for Whittier was in demand as a newspaper editor. He was, in fact, becoming a public man. At one time he was nominated for Congress, but his health was so poor that he had to withdraw his name before the election. There were three things that, true to his Quaker principles, he used all the weight of his influence against. These were intemperance, war, and slavery. He wrote a great deal in both prose and verse on these three subjects, but particularly the last.

Whittier becomes an editor

On this only a very small party of his countrymen at that time agreed with him; and more than once his office was attacked, his papers were burned, mobs followed him when he went to public anti-slavery meetings, and he narrowly escaped stones and fists, despite his Quaker garb. But he was not to be daunted in anything that he believed to be right; and it was one very beautiful trait of his character, — and one all too rare in this world, — that he could firmly disagree with another man's opinion without in the least quarreling with the man. That is probably one reason why he had always warm friends in all parts of the country, whether they were of his way of thinking or not.

Every day was adding to his reputation as "the Quaker poet"; but it was not until after ill-health had forced him to settle down quietly at home, that he wrote the greater number of those poems that we still delight to read. Meanwhile, the family had sold the old farm and bought a little cottage in Amesbury, and this was the poet's home for the remaining fifty-six years of his life.

Whittier's poems

If we look at the "Table of Contents" of Whittier's *Poems*, — and that is a pretty good way, too, to get some idea of the extent of an author's work, — we will find a large group of poems called "legendary." Here, then, is a poet who loved old tales, and, most of all, if we may judge by the titles, tales of the land where he was born. "Telling the Bees," "Abraham Davenport," and "How the Robin Came" are examples of this. Recollections of his own boyhood appear not alone in "Snow-Bound" but also in "The Barefoot Boy" and in "My Playmate."

In fact, Whittier put so much of his own heart into his poems that if we were to read them all in the order in which they were written, we could hardly have a better biography. Such poems as the ringing Corn-Song in "The Huskers" or the sympathetic stanzas of "The Poor Voter on Election Day" tell us that this poet was, in the very best sense, a man of the world, — one who respected toil, who hated injustice and who loved his country and helped his fellow men.

You may notice in reading Whittier's poems, how often he peaks of the golden hue of sunset or of autumn or of the fruit f the harvest, and how seldom he mentions other colors. He nce said, "I have always thought the rainbow *beautiful*, but hey tell me I have never seen it. Its only color to me is yel-ow." In other words, Whittier was color-blind. He wrote of 'scarlet maples," but he only called them so because others lid, for red and green both to him were yellow. Neverthe-ess, this defect did not at all lessen the poet's love for nature, r his descriptive powers — as you will see when you read 'Among the Hills," "April," "The Mayflowers," and "The ast Walk in Autumn."

When Whittier wrote "Snow-Bound," only one was left of ll that circle that used to gather round the homestead earth; and to this one, his brother, he dedicated he poem. He outlived his brother, too, by many years; outlived Longfellow and Hawthorne and Bayard Taylor and Garrison and Lowell, and almost all the ther poets and story-tellers and public men who had been he fellow-workers and the friends of his life. The year be-ore his death, when he was nearly eighty-four, he wrote this etter to Oliver Wendell Holmes: —

Whittier's friends

NEWBURYPORT, 8th mo., 18, 1891.

Ever since I heard the sad news of Lowell's death, I have een thinking of thee, and longing to see thee, for we are now tanding alone. The bright, beautiful ones who began life with s have all passed into the great shadow of silence, or rather et us hope, in the language of Henry Vaughan, "They have one into the world of light, and we alone are lingering here!" Vell, I at least shall soon follow them, and I wait the call ith a calm trust in the Eternal Goodness. I have been ill ll summer, but the world is still fair to me; my friends are ery dear to me; I love and am loved. And it is a great joy o me that I can think of thee as well, and in the full enjoy-ent of all thy gifts and powers, surrounded still with friends ho love and honor thee.

The following stanzas from a poem by Holmes beautifully express Whittier's character both as a man and as a poet: —

For thee, dear friend, there needs no high-wrought lay,
To shed its aureole round thy cherished name, —
Thou whose plain, home-born speech of *Yea* and *Nay*
Thy truthful nature ever best became.

Death reaches not a spirit such as thine, —
It can but steal the robe that hid thy wings;
Though thy warm breathing presence we resign,
Still in our hearts its loving semblance clings.

Peaceful thy message, yet for struggling right, —
When Slavery's gauntlet in our face was flung, —
While timid weaklings watched the dubious fight
No herald's challenge more defiant rung.

Yet was thy spirit tuned to gentle themes
Sought in the haunts thy humble youth had known.
Our stern New England's hills and vales and streams, —
Thy tuneful idyls made them all their own.

The wild flowers springing from thy native sod
Lent all their charms thy new-world song to fill, —
Gave thee the mayflower and the golden-rod
To match the daisy and the daffodil.

In the brave records of our earlier time
A hero's deed thy generous soul inspired,
And many a legend, told in ringing rhyme,
The youthful soul with high resolve has fired.

Not thine to lean on priesthood's broken reed;
No barriers caged thee in a bigot's fold;
Did zealots ask to syllable thy creed,
Thou saidst "Our Father," and thy creed was told.

Best loved and saintliest of our singing train,
Earth's noblest tributes to thy name belong.
A lifelong record closed without a stain,
A blameless memory shrined in deathless song.

POEMS BY WHITTIER

PROEM

I LOVE the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rhyme
Beat often Labor's hurried time.
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife.
are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
To rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

O Freedom! if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine!

SNOW-BOUND: A WINTER IDYL

TO THE MEMORY OF THE HOUSEHOLD IT DESCRIBES, THIS POEM IS DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common Wood Fire : and as the Celestial fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of Wood doth the same." (COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, book I, chap. V.)

> "Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
> Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
> Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
> Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
> And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
> The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
> Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
> Around the radiant fireplace, inclosed
> In a tumultuous privacy of storm."
>
> (EMERSON, *The Snow-Storm.*)

THE sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east; we heard the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores, —
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows:
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows;
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.
Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow:
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake and pellicle
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below, —
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden-wall or belt of wood;

A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?)
Our buskins on our feet we drew;
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through;
And, where the drift was deepest, made
A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal: we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din,
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked;
The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,
Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;

Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicèd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled with care our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back, —
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,

And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rhyme: "*Under the tree*
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness of their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed,
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,

The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change! — with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now, —
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!
Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,

That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
"The chief of Gambia's golden shore."
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a far-blown trumpet stirred
The languorous, sin-sick air, I heard
"*Does not the voice of reason cry,*
Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly
Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock trees;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
The hake-broil on the driftwood coals;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.

We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow
The square sail of the gundalow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cochecho town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
So rich and picturesque and free
(The common unrhymed poetry
Of simple life and country ways),
The story of her early days, —
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room,
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.
Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave

From painful Sewel's ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint, —
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint! —
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence, mad for food,
With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
The good man from his living grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise flashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes, who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;

A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
  Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shagbark overhead
  The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome whereso'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
Called up her girlhood memories,
The huskings and the apple-bees,

The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dried so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who had for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee, — rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.

Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago: —
The chill weight of the winter snow
For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod,
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school
Held at the fire his favored place;
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation's reach
In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater's keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Arachthus took
The guise of any grist-mill brook.

And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.
A careless boy that night he seemed;
  But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
  And hostage from the future took
  In trained thought and lore of book.
Large-brained, clear-eyed, — of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;
All chains from limb and spirit strike.
Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
Made murder pastime, and the hell
Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms remould, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
For blind routine, wise-handed skill;
A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,

s milder features dwarfed beside
er unbent will's majestic pride.
ie sat among us, at the best,
not unfeared, half-welcome guest,
ebuking with her cultured phrase
ur homeliness of words and ways.
certain pard-like, treacherous grace
Swayed the lithe limbs and dropped the lash,
Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
And under low brows, black with night,
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
he sharp heat-lightnings of her face
resaging ill to him whom Fate
ondemned to share her love or hate.
woman tropical, intense
thought and act, in soul and sense,
ie blended in a like degree
he vixen and the devotee,
evealing with each freak or feint
he temper of Petruchio's Kate,
ie raptures of Siena's saint.
er tapering hand and rounded wrist
ad facile power to form a fist;
ie warm, dark languish of her eyes
'as never safe from wrath's surprise.
rows saintly calm and lips devout
new every change of scowl and pout;
nd the sweet voice had notes more high
nd shrill for social battle-cry.
nce then what old cathedral town
as missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
'hat convent-gate has held its lock
gainst the challenge of her knock!
hrough Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,
p sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
ay olive slopes of hills that hem
ny tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
startling on her desert throne
ie crazy Queen of Lebanon
ith claims fantastic as her own.

Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,
  With hope each day renewed and fresh.
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!
Where'er her troubled path may be,
  The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
The outward wayward life we see,
  The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern
  What threads the fatal sisters spun,
  Through what ancestral years has run
The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,
  And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
  A lifelong discord and annoy,
  Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
  Perversities of flower and fruit.
It is not ours to separate
The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;
  But He who knows our frame is just,
Merciful and compassionate,
And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
  That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely-warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.

That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brand with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid
The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the lightsifted snow-flakes fall;
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.

Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go,
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
Their straining nostrils white with frost.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up, an added team to gain.
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
From lip to lip; the younger folks
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
Then toiled again the cavalcade
O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping-pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,
At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defence
Against the snow-balls' compliments,
And reading in each missive tost
The charm which Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
Just pausing at our door to say
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,
That some poor neighbor sick abed
At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?
All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,

And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
Since the great world was heard from last
The Almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,
A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvel that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,
And daft McGregor on his raids
In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetus winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding bell and dirge of death:
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail;
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
The pulse of life that round us beat;

The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast,
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God which breaks the strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways
Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
And dear and early friends — the few
Who yet remain — shall pause to view
These Flemish pictures of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,

And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

AMONG THE HILLS

PRELUDE

Along the roadside, like the flowers of gold
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers
Hang motionless upon their upright staves.
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,
Wing-weary with its long flight from the south,
Unfelt; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,
Confesses it. The locust by the wall
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.
A single hay-cart down the dusty road
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,
Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door
A drowsy smell of flowers — gray heliotrope,
And white sweet clover, and shy mignonette —
Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends
To the pervading symphony of peace.

No time is this for hands long over-worn
To task their strength: and (unto Him be praise
Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain
Of years that did the work of centuries
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once
more
Freely and full. So, as yon harvesters
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn
The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'e
Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft; and feeling
All their fine possibilities, how rich
And restful even poverty and toil
Become when beauty, harmony, and love
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man
Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock
The symbol of a Christian chivalry,
Tender and just and generous to her
Who clothes with grace all duty; still, I know
Too well the picture has another side.
How wearily the grind of toil goes on
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude
Of nature, and how hard and colorless
Is life without an atmosphere. I look
Across the lapse of half a century,
And a call to mind old homesteads, where n
flower
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock, in the pla
Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves

Across the curtainless windows from whose panes
Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness;
Within, the cluttered kitchen floor, unwashed
(Broom-clean I think they called it); the best room
Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless
Save the inevitable sampler hung
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, beneath
Impossible willows; the wide-throated hearth
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing
The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back;
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,
Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen men,
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,
With scarce a human interest save their own
Monotonous round of small economies,
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet;
For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink
Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves;
For them in vain October's holocaust
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,
The sacramental mystery of the woods.
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls
And winter pork with the least possible outlay
Of salt and sanctity; in daily life
Showing as little actual comprehension
Of Christian charity and love and duty,
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been
Outdated like a last year's almanac:
Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,
And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,
The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,
The sun and air his sole inheritance,
Laughed at poverty that paid its taxes,
And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land
Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell
As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,
With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make
His hour of leisure richer than a life
Of fourscore to the barons of old time;
Our yeoman should be equal to his home,
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,
A man to match his mountains, not to creep
Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain
In this light way (of which I needs must own
With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,
"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!")
Invite the eye to see and heart to feel
The beauty and the joy within their reach,—
Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes
Of nature free to all. Haply in years
That wait to take the places of our own,
Heard where some breezy balcony looks down
On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon
Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,
In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet
Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine
May seem the burden of a prophecy,
Finding its late fulfilment in a change
Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up
Through broader culture, finer manners, love,
And reverence, to the level of the hills.

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,
And not of sunset, forward, not behind,
Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee bring
All the old virtues, whatsoever things
Are pure and honest and of good repute,
But add thereto whatever bard has sung
Or seer has told of when in trance or dream
They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy!
Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide
Between the right and wrong; but give the heart

The freedom of its fair inheritance;
Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so long,
At Nature's table feast his ear and eye
With joy and wonder; let all harmonies
Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon
The princely guest, whether in soft attire
Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,
And, lending life to the dead form of faith,
Give human nature reverence for the sake
Of One who bore it, making it divine
With the ineffable tenderness of God;
Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,
The heirship of an unknown destiny,
The unsolved mystery round about us, make
A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.
Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things
Should minister, as outward types and signs
Of the eternal beauty which fulfils
The one great purpose of creation, Love,
The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

AMONG THE HILLS

For weeks the clouds had raked the hills
And vexed the vales with raining,
And all the woods were sad with mist,
And all the brooks complaining.

At last, a sudden night-storm tore
The mountain veils asunder,
And swept the valleys clean before
The besom of the thunder.

Through Sandwich Notch the west-wind sang
Good morrow to the cotter;
And once again Chocorua's horn
Of shadow pierced the water.

Above his broad lake Ossipee,
Once more the sunshine wearing,
Stooped, tracing on that silver shield
His grim armorial bearing.

Clear drawn against the hard blue sky
The peaks had winter's keenness;
And, close on autumn's frost, the vales
Had more than June's fresh greenness.

Again the sodden forest floors
With golden lights were checkered,
Once more rejoicing leaves in wind
And sunshine danced and flickered.

It was as if the summer's late
Atoning for its sadness
Had borrowed every season's charm
To end its days in gladness.

I call to mind those banded vales
Of shadow and of shining,
Through which, my hostess at my side,
I drove in day's declining.

We held our sideling way above
The river's whitening shallows,
By homesteads old, with wide-flung barns
Swept through and through by swallows, —

By maple orchards, belts of pine
And larches climbing darkly
The mountain slopes, and, over all,
The great peaks rising starkly.

You should have seen that long hill-range
With gaps of brightness riven, —
How through each pass and hollow streamed
The purpling lights of heaven, —

Rivers of gold-mist flowing down
From far celestial fountains, —
The great sun flaming through the rifts
Beyond the wall of mountains!

We paused at last where home-bound cows
Brought down the pasture's treasure,
And in the barn the rhythmic flails
Beat out a harvest measure.

We heard the night hawk's sullen plunge,
The crow his tree-mates calling:
The shadows lengthening down the slopes
About our feet were falling,

And through them smote the level sun
In broken lines of splendor,
Touched the gray rocks and made the green
Of the shorn grass more tender.

The maples bending o'er the gate,
Their arch of leaves just tinted
With yellow warmth, the golden glow
Of coming autumn hinted.

Keen white between the farm-house showed,
And smiled on porch and trellis
The fair democracy of flowers
That equals cot and palace.

And weaving garlands for her dog,
'Twixt chidings and caresses,
A human flower of childhood shook
The sunshine from her tresses.

On either hand we saw the signs
Of fancy and of shrewdness,
Where taste had wound its arms of vines
Round thrift's uncomely rudeness.

The sun-brown farmer in his frock
Shook hands, and called to Mary:
Bare-armed, as Juno might, she came,
White-aproned from her dairy.

Her air, her smile, her motions, told
Of womanly completeness;
A music as of household songs
Was in her voice of sweetness.

Not beautiful in curve and line
But something more and better,
The secret charm eluding art,
Its spirit, not its letter;—

An inborn grace that nothing lacked
Of culture or appliance,—
The warmth of genial courtesy,
The calm of self-reliance.

Before her queenly womanhood
How dared our hostess utter
The paltry errand of her need
To buy her fresh-churned butter?

She led the way with housewife pride,
Her goodly store disclosing,
Full tenderly the golden balls
With practised hands disposing.

Then, while along the western hills
We watched the changeful glory
Of sunset, on our homeward way,
I heard her simple story.

The early crickets sang; the stream
Plashed through my friend's narration
Her rustic patois of the hills
Lost in my free translation.

"More wise," she said, "than those who swarm
Our hills in middle summer,
She came, when June's first roses blow,
To greet the early comer.

"From school and ball and rout she came,
The city's fair, pale daughter,
To drink the wine of mountain air
Beside the Bearcamp Water.

"Her step grew firmer on the hills
That watch our homesteads over;
On cheek and lip, from summer fields,
She caught the bloom of clover.

"For health comes sparkling in the streams
From cool Chocorua stealing:
There 's iron in our Northern winds;
Our pines are trees of healing.

"She sat beneath the broad-armed elms
That skirt the mowing-meadow,
And watched the gentle west-wind weave
The grass with shine and shadow.

"Beside her, from the summer heat
To share her grateful screening,
With forehead bared, the farmer stood,
Upon his pitchfork leaning.

"Framed in its damp, dark locks, his face
Had nothing mean or common,—
Strong, manly, true, the tenderness
And pride beloved of woman.

"She looked up, glowing with the health
The country air had brought her,
And, laughing, said: 'You lack a wife,
Your mother lacks a daughter.

"'To mend your frock and bake your bread
You do not need a lady:
Be sure among these brown old homes
Is some one waiting ready, —

"'Some fair, sweet girl, with skilful hand
And cheerful heart for treasure,
Who never played with ivory keys,
Or danced the polka's measure.'

"He bent his black brows to a frown,
He set his white teeth tightly.
''T is well,' he said, 'for one like you
To choose for me so lightly.

"'You think, because my life is rude,
I take no note of sweetness:
I tell you love has naught to do
With meetness or unmeetness.

"'Itself its best excuse, it asks
No leave of pride or fashion
When silken zone or homespun frock
It stirs with throbs of passion.

"'You think me deaf and blind: you bring
Your winning graces hither
As free as if from cradle-time
We two had played together.

"'You tempt me with your laughing eyes,
Your cheek of sundown's blushes,
A motion as of waving grain,
A music as of thrushes.

"'The plaything of your summer sport,
The spells you weave around me
You cannot at your will undo,
Nor leave me as you found me.

"'You go as lightly as you came,
Your life is well without me;
What care you that these hills will close
Like prison walls about me?

"'No mood is mine to seek a wife,
Or daughter for my mother:
Who loves you loses in that love
All power to love another!

"'I dare your pity or your scorn,
With pride your own exceeding;
I fling my heart into your lap
Without a word of pleading.'

"She looked up in his face of pain,
So archly, yet so tender:
'And if I lend you mine,' she said,
'Will you forgive the lender?

"'Nor frock nor tan can hide the man;
And see you not, my farmer,
How weak and fond a woman waits
Behind this silken armor?

"'I love you: on that love alone,
And not my worth, presuming,
Will you not trust for summer fruit
The tree in May-day blooming?'

"Alone the hangbird overhead,
His hair-swung cradle staining,
Looked down to see love's miracle, —
The giving that is gaining

"And so the farmer found a wife,
His mother found a daughter:
There looks no happier home than hers
On pleasant Bearcamp Water.

"Flowers spring to blossom where she walks
The careful ways of duty;
Our hard, stiff lines of life with her
Are flowing curves of beauty.

"Our homes are cheerier for her sake,
Our door-yards brighter blooming,
And all about the social air
Is sweeter for her coming.

"Unspoken homilies of peace
Her daily life is preaching;
The still refreshment of the dew
Is her unconscious teaching.

"And never tenderer hand than hers
Unknits the brow of ailing;
Her garments to the sick man's ear
Have music in their trailing.

"And when, in pleasant harvest moons,
The youthful huskers gather,
Or sleigh-drives on the mountain ways
Defy the winter weather, —

"In sugar-camps, when south and warm
The winds of March are blowing,
And sweetly from its thawing veins
The maple's blood is flowing, —

"In summer, where some lilied pond
Its virgin zone is baring,
Or where the ruddy autumn fire
Lights up the apple-paring, —

"The coarseness of a ruder time
Her finer mirth displaces,
A subtler sense of pleasure fills
Each rustic sport she graces.

"Her presence lends its warmth and health
To all who come before it.
If woman lost us Eden, such
As she alone restore it.

"For larger life and wiser aims
The farmer is her debtor;
Who holds to his another's heart
Must needs be worse or better.

"Through her his civic service shows
A purer-toned ambition;
No double consciousness divides
The man and politician.

"In party's doubtful ways he trusts
Her instincts to determine;
At the loud polls, the thought of her
Recalls Christ's Mountain Sermon.

"He owns her logic of the heart,
And wisdom of unreason,
Supplying, while he doubts and weighs,
The needed word in season.

"He sees with pride her richer thought,
Her fancy's freer ranges;
And love thus deepened to respect
Is proof against all changes.

"And if she walks at ease in ways
His feet are slow to travel,
And if she reads with cultured eyes
What his may scarce unravel,

"Still clearer, for her keener sight
Of beauty and of wonder,
He learns the meaning of the hills
He dwelt from childhood under.

"And higher, warmed with summer lights,
Or winter-crowned and hoary,
The rigid horizon lifts for him
Its inner veils of glory.

"He has his own free, bookless lore,
The lessons nature taught him,
The wisdom which the woods and hills
And toiling men have brought him:

"The steady force of will whereby
Her flexile grace seems sweeter;
The sturdy counterpoise which makes
Her woman's life completer:

"A latent fire of soul which lacks
No breath of love to fan it;
And wit, that like his native brooks,
Plays over solid granite.

"How dwarfed against his manliness
She sees the poor pretension,
The wants, the aims, the follies, born
Of fashion and convention!

"How life behind its accidents
Stands strong and self-sustaining,
The human fact transcending all
The losing and the gaining.

"And so, in grateful interchange
Of teacher and of hearer,
Their lives their true distinctness keep
While daily drawing nearer.

"And if the husband or the wife
In home's strong light discovers
Such slight defaults as failed to meet
The blinded eyes of lovers

"Why need we care to ask? — who dreams
Without their thorns of roses,
Or wonders that the truest steel
The readiest spark discloses?

"For still in mutual sufferance lies
The secret of true living:
Love scarce is love that never knows
The sweetness of forgiving.

"We send the Squire to General Court,
He takes his young wife thither;
No prouder man election day
Rides through the sweet June weather.

"He sees with eyes of manly trust
All hearts to her inclining;
Not less for him his household light
That others share its shining."

Thus, while my hostess spake, there grew
Before me, warmer tinted
And outlined with a tenderer grace,
The picture that she hinted.

The sunset smouldered as we drove
Beneath the deep hill-shadows.
Below us wreaths of white fog walked
Like ghosts the haunted meadows.

Sounding the summer night, the stars
Dropped down their golden plummets
The pale arc of the Northern lights
Rose o'er the mountain summits, —

Until, at last, beneath its bridge,
We heard the Bearcamp flowing,
And saw across the mapled lawn
The welcome home-lights glowing; —

And, musing on the tale I heard,
'T were well, thought I, if often,
To rugged farm-life came the gift
To harmonize and soften;—

If more and more we found the troth
Of fact and fancy plighted,
And culture's charm and labor's strength
In rural homes united,—

The simple life, the homely hearth,
With beauty's sphere surrounding,
And blessing toil where toil abounds
With graces more abounding.

SONGS OF LABOR

DEDICATION

I would the gift I offer here
Might graces from thy favor take,
And, seen through Friendship's atmosphere,
On softened lines and coloring, wear
The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy sake.

Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain:
But what I have I give to thee,
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,
And paler flowers, the later rain
Calls from the westering slope of life's autumnal lea.

Above the fallen groves of green,
Where youth's enchanted forest stood,
Dry root and mossèd trunk between,
A sober after-growth is seen,
As springs the pine where falls the gay-leafed maple wood!

Yet birds will sing, and breezes play
Their leaf-harps in the sombre tree;
And through the bleak and wintry day
It keeps its steady green alway,—
, even my after-thoughts may have a charm for thee.

Art's perfect forms no moral need,
And beauty is its own excuse;
But for the dull and flowerless weed
Some healing virtue still must plead,
id the rough ore must find its honors in its use.

So haply these, my simple lays
Of homely toil, may serve to show
The orchard bloom and tasselled maize
That skirt and gladden duty's ways,
e unsung beauty hid life's common things below.

Haply from them the toiler, bent
Above his forge or plough, may gain
A manlier spirit of content,
And feel that life is wisest spent
here the strong working hand makes strong the working brain.

The doom which to the guilty pair
Without the walls of Eden came,
Transforming sinless ease to care
And rugged toil, no more shall bear
e burden of old crime, or mark of primal shame.

A blessing now, a curse no more;
Since He, whose name we breathe with awe,
The coarse mechanic vesture wore,
A poor man toiling with the poor,
labor, as in prayer, fulfilling the same law.

THE SHOEMAKERS

Ho! workers of the old time styled
The Gentle Craft of Leather!
Young brothers of the ancient guild,
Stand forth once more together!
Call out again your long array,
In the olden merry manner!
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,
Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone
How falls the polished hammer!
Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown
A quick and merry clamor.
Now shape the sole! now deftly curl
The glossy vamp around it,
And bless the while the bright-eyed girl
Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you, along the Spanish main
A hundred keels are ploughing;
For you, the Indian on the plain
His lasso-coil is throwing;
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark
The woodman's fire is lighting;
For you, upon the oak's gray bark,
The woodman's axe is smiting.

For you, from Carolina's pine
The rosin-gum is stealing;
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine
Her silken skein is reeling;
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams
His rugged Alpine ledges;
For you, round all her shepherd homes,
Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,
On moated mound or heather,

Where'er the need of trampled right
Brought toiling men together;
Where the free burghers from the wall
Defied the mail-clad master,
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,
No craftsman rallied faster.

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,
Ye heed no idle scorner;
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,
And duty done, your honor.
Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,
The jury Time empanels,
And leave to truth each noble name
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sachs, are living yet,
In strong and hearty German;
And Bloomfield's lay, and Gifford's wit,
And patriot fame of Sherman;
Still from his book, a mystic seer,
The soul of Behmen teaches,
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear
Of Fox's leathern breeches.

The foot is yours; where'er it falls,
It treads your well-wrought leather
On earthen floor, in marble halls,
On carpet, or on heather.
Still there the sweetest charm is found
Of matron grace or vestal's,
As Hebe's foot bore nectar round
Among the old celestials!

Rap, rap! your stout and rough brogan,
With footsteps slow and weary,
May wander where the sky's blue span
Shuts down upon the prairie.
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,
By Saratoga's fountains,

Or twinkle down the summer dance
Beneath the Crystal Mountains!

The red brick to the mason's hand,
The brown earth to the tiller's,
The shoe in yours shall wealth command,
Like fairy Cinderella's!
As they who shunned the household maid
Beheld the crown upon her,
So all shall see your toil repaid
With hearth and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,
In water cool and brimming, —
"All honor to the good old Craft,
Its merry men and women!"
Call out again your long array,
In the old time's pleasant manner:
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,
Fling out his blazoned banner!

THE FISHERMEN

Hurrah! the seaward breezes
Sweep down the bay amain;
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!
Run up the sail again!
Leave to the lubber landsmen
The rail-car and the steed;
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed.

From the hill-top looks the steeple,
And the light-house from the sand;
And the scattered pines are waving
Their farewell from the land.
One glance, my lads, behind us,
For the homes we leave one sigh
Ere we take the change and chances
Of the ocean and the sky.

Now, brothers, for the icebergs
Of frozen Labrador,
Floating spectral in the moonshine,
Along the low, black shore!
Where like snow the gannet's feathers
On Brador's rocks are shed,
And the noisy murr are flying,
Like black scuds, overhead;

Where in mist the rock is hiding,
And the sharp reef lurks below,
And the white squall smites in summer,
And the autumn tempests blow;
Where through gray and rolling vapor,
From evening unto morn,
A thousand boats are hailing,
Horn answering unto horn.

Hurrah! for the Red Island,
With the white cross on its crown!
Hurrah! for Meccatina,
And its mountains bare and brown!
Where the Caribou's tall antlers
O'er the dwarf-wood freely toss,
And the footstep of the Mickmack
Has no sound upon the moss.

There we 'll drop our lines, and gather
Old Ocean's treasures in,
Where'er the mottled mackerel
Turns up a steel-dark fin.
The sea 's our field of harvest,
Its scaly tribes our grain;
We 'll reap the teeming waters
As at home they reap the plain!

Our wet hands spread the carpet,
And light the hearth of home;
From our fish, as in the old time,
The silver coin shall come.

As the demon fled the chamber
Where the fish of Tobit lay,
So ours from all our dwellings
Shall frighten Want away.

Though the mist upon our jackets
In the bitter air congeals,
And our lines wind stiff and slowly
From off the rozen reels;
Though the fog be dark around us,
And the storm blow high and loud,
We will whistle down the wild wind,
And laugh beneath the cloud!

In the darkness as in daylight,
On the water as on land,
God's eye is looking on us,
And beneath us is His hand
Death will find us soon or later,
On the deck or in the cot;
And we cannot meet him better
Than in working out our lot.

Hurrah! hurrah! the west-wind
Comes freshening down the bay,
The rising sails are filling;
Give way, my lads, give way!
Leave the coward landsman clinging
To the dull earth, like a weed;
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed!

THE LUMBERMEN

Wildly round our woodland quarters
Sad-voiced Autumn grieves;
Thickly down these swelling waters
Float his fallen leaves.

Through the tall and naked timber,
Column-like and old,
Gleam the sunsets of November,
From their skies of gold.

O'er us, to the southland heading,
Screams the gray wild-goose;
On the night-frost sounds the treading
Of the brindled moose.
Noiseless creeping, while we 're sleeping,
Frost his task-work plies;
Soon, his icy bridges heaping,
Shall our log-piles rise.

When, with sounds of smothered thunder,
On some night of rain,
Lake and river break asunder
Winter's weakened chain,
Down the wild March flood shall bear them
To the saw-mill's wheel,
Or where Steam, the slave, shall tear them
With his teeth of steel.

Be it starlight, be it moonlight,
In these vales below,
When the earliest beams of sunlight
Streak the mountain's snow,
Crisps the hoar-frost, keen and early,
To our hurrying feet,
And the forest echoes clearly,
All our blows repeat.

Where the crystal Ambijejis
Stretches broad and clear,
And Millnoket's pine-black ridges
Hide the browsing deer;
Where, through lakes and wide morasses,
Or through rocky walls,
Swift and strong, Penobscot passes
White with foamy falls;

Where, through clouds, are glimpses given
Of Katahdin's sides, —
Rock and forest piled to heaven,
Torn and ploughed by slides!
Far below, the Indian trapping,
In the sunshine warm;
Far above, the snow-cloud wrapping
Half the peak in storm!

Where are mossy carpets better
Than the Persian weaves,
And than Eastern perfumes sweeter
Seem the fading leaves;
And a music wild and solemn,
From the pine-tree's height,
Rolls its vast and sea-like volume
On the wind of night;

Make we here our camp of winter;
And, through sleet and snow,
Pitchy knot and beechen splinter
On our hearth shall glow.
Here, with mirth to lighten duty,
We shall lack alone
Woman's smile and girlhood's beauty,
Childhood's lisping tone.

But their hearth is brighter burning
For our toil to-day;
And the welcome of returning
Shall our loss repay,
When, like seamen from the waters,
From the woods we come,
Greeting sisters, wives, and daughters,
Angels of our home!

Not for us the measured ringing
From the village spire,
Not for us the Sabbath singing
Of the sweet-voiced choir;

Ours the old, majestic temple,
Where God's brightness shines
Down the dome so grand and ample,
Propped by lofty pines!

Through each branch-enwoven skylight,
Speaks He in the breeze,
As of old beneath the twilight
Of lost Eden's trees!
For His ear, the inward feeling
Needs no outward tongue;
He can see the spirit kneeling
While the axe is swung.

Heeding truth alone, and turning
From the false and dim,
Lamp of toil or altar burning
Are alike to Him.
Strike, then, comrades! Trade is waiting
On our rugged toil;
Far ships waiting for the freighting
Of our woodland spoil!

Ships, whose traffic links these highlands,
Bleak and cold, of ours,
With the citron-planted islands
Of a clime of flowers;
To our frosts the tribute bringing
Of eternal heats;
In our lap of winter flinging
Tropic fruits and sweets.

Cheerly, on the axe of labor,
Let the sunbeams dance,
Better than the flash of sabre
Or the gleam of lance!
Strike! With every blow is given
Freer sun and sky,
And the long-hid earth to heaven
Looks, with wondering eye!

Loud behind us grow the murmurs
Of the age to come;
Clang of smiths, and tread of farmers,
Bearing harvest home!
Here her virgin lap with treasures
Shall the green earth fill;
Waving wheat and golden maize-ears
Crown each beechen hill.

Keep who will the city's alleys,
Take the smooth-shorn plain;
Give to us the cedarn valleys,
Rocks and hills of Maine!
In our North-land, wild and woody,
Let us still have part;
Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,
Hold us to thy heart!

Oh, our free hearts beat the warmer
For thy breath of snow;
And our tread is all the firmer
For thy rocks below.
Freedom, hand in hand with labor,
Walketh strong and brave;
On the forehead of his neighbor
No man writeth Slave!

Lo, the day breaks! old Katahdin's
Pine-trees show its fires,
While from these dim forest gardens
Rise their blackened spires.
Up, my comrades! up and doing!
Manhood's rugged play
Still renewing, bravely hewing
Through the world our way!

THE SHIP-BUILDERS

The sky is ruddy in the east,
The earth is gray below,
And spectral in the river-mist,
The ship's white timbers show.
Then let the sounds of measured stroke
And grating saw begin;
The broad-axe to the gnarlèd oak,
The mallet to the pin!

Hark! roars the bellows, blast on blast,
The sooty smithy jars,
The fire-sparks, rising far and fast,
Are fading with the stars.
All day for us the smith shall stand
Beside that flashing forge;
All day for us his heavy hand
The groaning anvil scourge.

From far-off hills, the panting team
For us is toiling near;
For us the raftsmen down the stream
Their island barges steer.
Rings out for us the axe-man's stroke
In forests old and still;
For us the century-circled oak
Falls crashing down his hill.

Up! up! in nobler toil than ours
No craftsmen bear a part:
We make of Nature's giant powers
The slaves of human Art.
Lay rib to rib and beam to beam,
And drive the treenails free;
Nor faithless joint nor yawning seam
Shall tempt the searching sea!

Where'er the keel of our good ship
The sea's rough field shall plough:

Where'er her tossing spars shall drip
With salt-spray caught below;
That ship must heed her master's beck
Her helm obey his hand,
And seamen tread her reeling deck
As if they trod the land.

Her oaken ribs the vulture-beak
Of Northern ice may peel;
The sunken rock and coral peak
May grate along her keel;
And know we well the painted shell
We give to wind and wave,
Must float, the sailor's citadel,
Or sink, the sailor's grave!

Ho! strike away the bars and blocks,
And set the good ship free!
Why lingers on these dusty rocks
The young bride of the sea?
Look! how she moves adown the grooves,
In graceful beauty now!
How lowly on the breast she loves
Sinks down her virgin prow!

God bless her! Wheresoe'er the breeze
Her snowy wing shall fan,
Aside the frozen Hebrides
Or sultry Hindostan!
Where'er, in mart or on the main,
With peaceful flag unfurled,
She helps to wind the silken chain
Of commerce round the world!

Speed on the ship! But let her bear
No merchandise of sin,
No groaning cargo of despair
Her roomy hold within;
No Lethean drug for Eastern lands,
Nor poison-draught for ours:

But honest fruits of toiling hands
And Nature's sun and showers.

Be hers the Prairie's golden grain,
The Desert's golden sand,
The clustered fruits of sunny Spain,
The spice of Morning-land!
Her pathway on the open main
May blessings follow free,
And glad hearts welcome back again
Her white sails from the sea!

THE DROVERS

Through heat and cold, and shower and sun,
Still onward cheerily driving!
There 's life alone in duty done,
And rest alone in striving.
But see! the day is closing cool,
The woods are dim before us;
The white fog of the wayside pool
Is creeping slowly o'er us.

The night is falling, comrades mine,
Our footsore beasts are weary,
And through yon elms the tavern sign
Looks out upon us cheery.
The landlord beckons from his door,
His beechen fire is glowing;
These ample barns, with feed in store,
Are filled to overflowing.

From many a valley frowned across
By brows of rugged mountains;
From hillsides where, through spongy moss,
Gush out the river fountains;
From quiet farm-fields, green and low,
And bright with blooming clover;
From vales of corn the wandering crow
No richer hovers over, —

Day after day our way has been
O'er many a hill and hollow;
By lake and stream, by wood and glen,
Our stately drove we follow.
Through dust-clouds rising thick and dun
As smoke of battle o'er us,
Their white horns glisten in the sun,
Like plumes and crests before us.

We see them slowly climb the hill,
As slow behind it sinking;
Or, thronging close, from roadside rill,
Or sunny lakelet, drinking.
Now crowding in the narrow road,
In thick and struggling masses,
They glare upon the teamster's load,
Or rattling coach that passes.

Anon, with toss of horn and tail,
And paw of hoof, and bellow,
They leap some farmer's broken pale,
O'er meadow-close or fallow.
Forth comes the startled goodman; forth
Wife, children, house-dog sally,
Till once more on their dusty path
The baffled truants rally.

We drive no starvelings, scraggy grown,
Loose-legged, and ribbed and bony,
Like those who grind their noses down
On pastures bare and stony,—
Lank oxen, rough as Indian dogs,
And cows too lean for shadows,
Disputing feebly with the frogs
The crop of saw-grass meadows!

In our good drove, so sleek and fair,
No bones of leanness rattle.
No tottering hide-bound ghosts are there,
Or Pharaoh's evil cattle.

Each stately beeve bespeaks the hand
That fed him unrepining;
The fatness of a goodly land
In each dun hide is shining.

We 've sought them where, in warmest nooks,
The freshest feed is growing,
By sweetest springs and clearest brooks
Through honeysuckle flowing;
Wherever hillsides, sloping south,
Are bright with early grasses,
Or, tracking green the lowland's drouth,
The mountain streamlet passes.

But now the day is closing cool,
The woods are dim before us,
The white fog of the wayside pool
Is creeping slowly o'er us.
The cricket to the frog's bassoon
His shrillest time is keeping;
The sickle of yon setting moon
The meadow-mist is reaping.

The night is falling, comrades mine,
Our footsore beasts are weary,
And through yon elms the tavern sign
Looks out upon us cheery.
To-morrow, eastward with our charge
We 'll go to meet the dawning,
Ere yet the pines of Kearsarge
Have seen the sun of morning.

When snow-flakes o'er the frozen earth,
Instead of birds, are flitting;
When children throng the glowing hearth,
And quiet wives are knitting;
While in the firelight strong and clear
Young eyes of pleasure glisten,
To tales of all we see and hear
The ears of home shall listen.

By many a Northern lake and hill,
From many a mountain pasture,
Shall fancy play the Drover still,
And speed the long night faster.
Then let us on, through shower and sun,
And heat and cold, be driving;
There 's life alone in duty done,
And rest alone in striving.

THE HUSKERS

It was late in mild October, and the long autumnal rain
Had left the summer harvest-fields all green with grass again;
The first sharp frost had fallen, leaving all the woodlands gay
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the meadow flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose broad and red,
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as he sped
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and subdued,
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pictured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the night,
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow light
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified the hill;
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay brighter greener still.

And shouting boys in woodland haunts caught glimpses of that sky,
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and laughed they knew not why,

nd school-girls gay with aster-flowers, beside the meadow brooks,
ngled the glow of autumn with the sunshine of sweet looks.

om spire and barn looked westerly the patient weathercocks;
t even the birches on the hill stood motionless as rocks.
sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's dropping shell,
d the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rustling as they fell.

e summer grains were harvested; the stubble-fields lay dry,
here June winds rolled, in light and shade, the pale green waves of rye;
t still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed with wood,
gathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn crop stood.

nt low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks that, dry and sere,
folded from their ripened charge, shone out the yellow ear;
neath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant fold,
d glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's sphere of gold.

ere wrought the busy harvesters; and many a creaking wain
e slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and grain;
l broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,
d like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed.

And lo! as through the western pines, on meadow
stream, and pond,
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire be
yond,
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory shone
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled int
one!

As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranqui
shadows lay;
From many a brown old farm-house, and hamle
without name,
Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merr
huskers came.

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchfork
in the mow,
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scen
below;
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ear
before,
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown cheek
glimmering o'er.

Half-hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look and hear
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart;
While up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling i
its shade,
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happ
children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden youn
and fair,
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of sc
brown hair,
The master of the village school, sleek of hair an
smooth of tongue,
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a huskin
ballad sung.

THE CORN-SONG

Heap high the farmer's wintry hoard!
Heap high the golden corn!
No richer gift has Autumn poured
From out her lavish horn!

Let other lands, exulting, glean
The apple from the pine,
The orange from its glossy green,
The cluster from the vine;

We better love the hardy gift
Our rugged vales bestow,
To cheer us when the storm shall drift
Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers
Our ploughs their furrows made,
While on the hills the sun and showers
Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain
Beneath the sun of May,
And frightened from our sprouting grain
The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June
Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer's noon
Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with Autumn's moonlit eyes,
Its harvest-time has come,
We pluck away the frosted leaves,
And bear the treasure home.

There, when the snows about us drift,
And winter winds are cold,
Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,
And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk
  Around their costly board;
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,
  By homespun beauty poured!

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth
  Sends up its smoky curls,
Who will not thank the kindly earth,
  And bless our farmer girls!

Then shame on all the proud and vain,
  Whose folly laughs to scorn
The blessing of our hardy grain,
  Our wealth of golden corn!

Let earth withhold her goodly root,
  Let mildew blight the rye,
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit
  The wheat-field to the fly:

But let the good old crop adorn
  The hills our fathers trod;
Still let us, for His golden corn,
  Send up our thanks to God!

THE BAREFOOT BOY

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!

Prince thou art, — the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye, —
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy, —
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,

When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread;
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold,
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!

Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

MY PLAYMATE

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear;
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

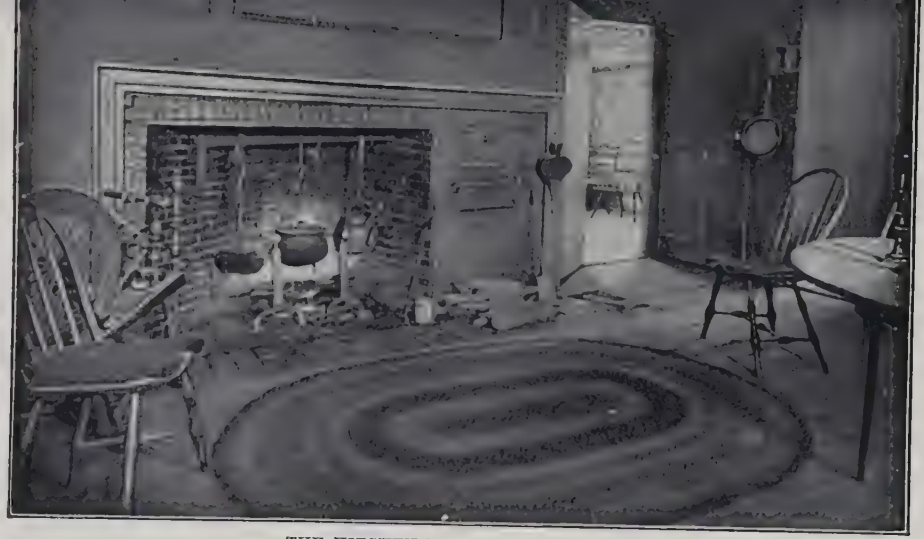
There haply with her jewelled hands
She smoothes her silken gown, —
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems, —
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice;
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?



THE KITCHEN IN WHITTIER'S HOME

From a photograph. The room on the right, opening from the kitchen, is the chamber in which the poet was born. The homestead is now owned by a Whittier Memorial Association, and, being open to the public, is visited by thousands of persons annually.

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours, —
That other hands with nuts are filled,
And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea, —
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

TELLING THE BEES

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;

And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There 's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze:
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed, —
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now, — the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before, —
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door, —
Nothing changed but the hive of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead to-day:

Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

THE POET AND THE CHILDREN

LONGFELLOW

With a glory of winter sunshine
Over his locks of gray,
In the old historic mansion
He sat on his last birthday;

With his books and his pleasant pictures,
And his household and his kin,
While a sound as of myriads singing
From far and near stole in.

It came from his own fair city,
From the prairie's boundless plain,
From the Golden Gate of sunset,
And the cedarn woods of Maine.

And his heart grew warm within him,
And his moistening eyes grew dim,
For he knew that his country's children
Were singing the songs of him:

The lays of his life's glad morning,
The psalms of his evening time,
Whose echoes shall float forever
On the winds of every clime.

All their beautiful consolations,
Sent forth like birds of cheer,
Came flocking back to his windows,
And sang in the Poet's ear.

Grateful, but solemn and tender,
The music rose and fell
With a joy akin to sadness
And a greeting like farewell.

With a sense of awe he listened
To the voices sweet and young;
The last of earth and the first of heaven
Seemed in the songs they sung.

And waiting a little longer
For the wonderful change to come,
He heard the Summoning Angel,
Who calls God's children home!

And to him in a holier welcome
Was the mystical meaning given
Of the words of the blessed Master:
"Of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

BURNS

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER IN BLOSSOM

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish maid and lover;
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
The minstrel and the heather,
The deathless singer and the flowers
He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mention, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold
And purple of adorning,
And manhood's noonday shadows hold
The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil
From off the wings of pleasure,
The sky, that flecked the ground of toil
With golden threads of leisure.

I call to mind the summer day,
The early harvest mowing,
The sky with sun and clouds at play,
And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,
The locust in the haying;
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,
Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,
I sought the maple's shadow,
And sang with Burns the hours away,
Forgetful of the meadow!

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
I heard the squirrels leaping,
The good dog listened while I read,
And wagged his tail in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood
I read "*The Twa Dogs*'" story,
And half believed he understood
The poet's allegory.

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours
Grew brighter for that singing,
From brook and bird and meadow flowers
A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,
New glory over Woman;
And daily life and duty seemed
No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth
Of fact and feeling better
Than all the dreams that held my youth
A still repining debtor:

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,
The themes of sweet discoursing;
The tender idyls of the heart
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
Of loving knight and lady,
When farmer boy and barefoot girl
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things
The romance underlying;
The joys and griefs that plume the wings
Of Fancy skyward flying.

I saw the same blithe day return,
The same sweet fall of even,
That rose on wooded Craigie-burn,
And sank on crystal Devon.

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills
The sweetbrier and the clover;
With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,
Their wood hymns chanting over.

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,
I saw the Man uprising;
No longer common or unclean,
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at his Cotter's hearth
Had made my own more holy.

And if at times an evil strain,
To lawless love appealing,
Broke in upon the sweet refrain
Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,
No inward answer gaining;
No heart had I to see or hear
The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget
His worth, in vain bewailings;
Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt
Uncancelled by his failings!

Lament who will the ribald line
Which tells his lapse from duty,
How kissed the maddening lips of wine
Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between
The erring one and Heaven,
That he who loved like Magdalen,
Like her may be forgiven.

Not his the song whose thunderous chime
Eternal echoes render;
The mournful Tuscan's haunted rhyme,
And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid
To Nature's bosom nearer?
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong
The human feeling gushes!
The very moonlight of his song
Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,
So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry;
Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,
But spare his Highland Mary!

ABRAHAM DAVENPORT

In the old days (a custom laid aside
With breeches and cocked hats) the people sent
Their wisest men to make the public laws.
And so, from a brown homestead, where the Sound
Drinks the small tribute of the Mianas,
Waved over by the woods of Rippowams,
And hallowed by pure lives and tranquil deaths,
Stamford sent up to the councils of the State
Wisdom and grace in Abraham Davenport.

'T was on a May-day of the far old year
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell
Over the bloom and sweet life of the Spring,
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,
A horror of great darkness, like the night
In day of which the Norland sagas tell,—
The Twilight of the Gods. The low-hung sky
Was black with ominous clouds, save where its rim
Was fringed with a dull glow, like that which climb
The crater's sides from the red hell below.
Birds ceased to sing, and all the barn-yard fowls

oosted; the cattle at the pasture bars
owed, and looked homeward; bats on leathern wings
litted abroad; the sounds of labor died;
len prayed, and women wept; all ears grew sharp
o hear the doom-blast of the trumpet shatter
he black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ
light look from the rent clouds, not as he looked
loving guest at Bethany, but stern
s Justice and inexorable Law.

Meanwhile in the old State House, dim as ghosts,
at the lawgivers of Connecticut,
rembling beneath their legislative robes.
It is the Lord's Great Day! Let us adjourn,"
ome said; and then, as if with one accord,
ll eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.
e rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice
he intolerable hush. "This well may be
he Day of Judgment which the world awaits;
ut be it so or not, I only know
y present duty, and my Lord's command
o occupy till He come. So at the post
Vhere He hath set me in His providence,
choose, for one, to meet Him face to face,—
o faithless servant frightened from my task,
ut ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;
nd therefore, with all reverence, I would say,
et God do His work, we will see to ours.
ring in the candles." And they brought them in.

Then by the flaring lights the Speaker read,
lbeit with husky voice and shaking hands,
n act to amend an act to regulate
he shad and alewive fisheries. Whereupon
Visely and well spake Abraham Davenport,
raight to the question, with no figures of speech
ave the ten Arab signs, yet not without
he shrewd dry humor natural to the man:
is awe-struck colleagues listening all the while,
etween the pauses of his argument,

To hear the thunder of the wrath of God
Break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud.

And there he stands in memory to this day,
Erect, self-poised, a rugged face, half seen
Against the background of unnatural dark,
A witness to the ages as they pass,
That simple duty hath no place for fear.

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY

The proudest now is but my peer,
The highest not more high;
To-day, of all the weary year,
A king of men am I.
To-day alike are great and small,
The nameless and the known;
My palace is the people's hall,
The ballot-box my throne!

Who serves to-day upon the list
Beside the served shall stand;
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,
The gloved and dainty hand!
The rich is level with the poor,
The weak is strong to-day;
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more
Than homespun frock of gray.

To-day let pomp and vain pretence
My stubborn right abide;
I set a plain man's common sense
Against the pedant's pride.
To-day shall simple manhood try
The strength of gold and land;
The wide world has not wealth to buy
The power in my right hand!

While there 's a grief to seek redress,
Or balance to adjust,

Where weighs our living manhood less
Than Mammon's vilest dust, —
While there 's a right to need my vote,
A wrong to sweep away,
Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!
A man 's a man to-day!

THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS

ITEMIUS of Herbipolis, one day,
hile kneeling at the altar's foot to pray
one with God, as was his pious choice,
ard from without a miserable voice,
sound which seemed of all sad things to tell,
of a lost soul crying out of hell.

ereat the Abbot paused; the chain whereby
s thoughts went upward broken by that cry;
d, looking from the casement, saw below
wretched woman, with gray hair a-flow,
d withered hands held up to him, who cried
r alms as one who might not be denied.

e cried, "For the dear love of Him who gave
s life for ours, my child from bondage save, —
beautiful, brave first-born, chained with slaves
the Moor's galley, where the sun-smit waves
o the white walls of Tunis!" — "What I can

ive," Tritemius said, "my prayers." — "O man
God!" she cried, for grief had made her bold,
lock me not thus; I ask not prayers, but gold.
ords will not serve me, alms alone suffice;
en while I speak perchance my first-born dies."

Voman!" Tritemius answered, "from our door
ne go unfed, hence are we always poor;
ingle soldo is our only store.
ou hast our prayers; — what can we give thee
more?"

"Give me," she said, "the silver candlesticks
On either side of the great crucifix.
God well may spare them on His errands sped,
Or He can give you golden ones instead."

Then spake Tritemius, "Even as thy word,
Woman, so be it! (Our most gracious Lord,
Who loveth mercy more than sacrifice,
Pardon me if a human soul I prize
Above the gifts upon his altar piled!)
Take what thou askest, and redeem thy child."

But his hand trembled as the holy alms
He placed within the beggar's eager palms;
And as she vanished down the linden shade,
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.

So the day passed, and when the twilight came
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold
Upon the altar candlesticks of gold!

KING SOLOMON AND THE ANTS

Out from Jerusalem
The king rode with his great
War chiefs and lords of state,
And Sheba's queen with them;

Comely, but black withal,
To whom, perchance, belongs
That wondrous Song of songs,
Sensuous and mystical,

Whereto devout souls turn
In fond, ecstatic dream,
And through its earth-born theme
The Love of loves discern.

Proud in the Syrian sun,
In gold and purple sheen,
The dusky Ethiop queen
Smiled on King Solomon.

Wisest of men, he knew
The languages of all
The creatures great or small
That trod the earth or flew.

Across an ant-hill led
The king's path, and he heard
Its small folk, and their word
He thus interpreted:

"Here comes the king men greet
As wise and good and just,
To crush us in the dust
Under his heedless feet."

The great king bowed his head,
And saw the wide surprise
Of the Queen of Sheba's eyes
As he told her what they said.

"O king!" she whispered sweet,
"Too happy fate have they
Who perish in thy way
Beneath thy gracious feet!

"Thou of the God-lent crown,
Shall these vile creatures dare
Murmur against thee where
The knees of kings kneel down?"

"Nay," Solomon replied,
"The wise and strong should seek
The welfare of the weak."
And turned his horse aside.

His train, with quick alarm,
Curved with their leader round
The ant-hill's peopled mound,
And left it free from harm.

The jewelled head bent low;
"O king!" she said, "henceforth
The secret of thy worth
And wisdom well I know.

"Happy must be the State
Whose ruler heedeth more
The murmurs of the poor
Than flatteries of the great."

HOW THE ROBIN CAME

AN ALGONQUIN LEGEND

Happy young friends, sit by me
Under May's blown apple-tree,
While these home-birds in and out
Through the blossoms flit about.
Hear a story, strange and old,
By the wild red Indians told,
How the robin came to be;
Once a great chief left his son, —
Well-beloved, his only one, —
When the boy was well-nigh grown,
In the trial-lodge alone.
Left for tortures long and slow
Youths like him must undergo,
Who their pride of manhood test,
Lacking water, food, and rest.

Seven days the fast he kept,
Seven nights he never slept.
Then the young boy, wrung with pain,
Weak from nature's overstrain,

Faltering, moaned a low complaint:
"Spare me, father, for I faint!"
But the chieftain, haughty-eyed,
Hid his pity in his pride.
"You shall be a hunter good,
Knowing never lack of food:
You shall be a warrior great,
Wise as fox and strong as bear;
Many scalps your belt shall wear,
If with patient heart you wait
Bravely till your task is done.
Better you should starving die
Than that boy and squaw should cry
Shame upon your father's son!"

When next morn the sun's first rays
Glistened on the hemlock sprays,
Straight that lodge the old chief sought,
And boiled samp and moose meat brought.
"Rise and eat, my son!" he said.
Lo, he found the poor boy dead!
As with grief his grave they made,
And his bow beside him laid,
Pipe, and knife, and wampum-braid,
On the lodge-top overhead,
Preening smooth its breast of red
And the brown coat that it wore,
Sat a bird, unknown before.
And as if with human tongue,
"Mourn me not," it said, or sung:
"I, a bird, am still your son,
Happier than if hunter fleet,
Or a brave, before your feet
Laying scalps in battle won.
Friend of man, my song shall cheer
Lodge and corn-land; hovering near,
To each wigwam I shall bring
Tidings of the coming spring;
Every child my voice shall know
In the moon of melting snow.

When the maple's red bud swells,
And the wind-flower lifts its bells.
As their fond companion
Men shall henceforth own your son,
And my song shall testify
That of human kin am I."

Thus the Indian legend saith
How, at first, the robin came
With a sweeter life and death,
Bird for boy, and still the same.
If my young friends doubt that this
Is the robin's genesis,
Not in vain is still the myth
If a truth be found therewith:
Unto gentleness belong
Gifts unknown to pride and wrong
Happier far than hate is praise,—
He who sings than he who slays.

APRIL

"The spring comes slowly up this way."
Christabel

'T is the noon of the spring-time, yet never a bird
In the wind-shaken elm or the maple is heard;
For green meadow-grasses wide levels of snow,
And blowing of drifts where the crocus should blo
Where wind-flower and violet, amber and white,
On south-sloping brooksides should smile in the lig
O'er the cold winter-beds of their late-waking roots
The frosty flake eddies, the ice-crystal shoots;
And, longing for light, under wind-driven heaps,
Round the boles of the pine-wood the ground-lau
creeps,
Unkissed of the sunshine, unbaptized of showers,
With buds scarcely swelled, which should burst in
flowers!

'e wait for thy coming, sweet wind of the south!
)r the touch of thy light wings, the kiss of thy mouth;
)r the yearly evangel thou bearest from God,
esurrection and life to the graves of the sod!
) our long river-valley, for days, have not ceased
ie wail and the shriek of the bitter northeast,
aw and chill, as if winnowed through ices and snow,
l the way from the land of the wild Esquimau,
ntil all our dreams of the land of the blest,
ke that red hunter's, turn to the sunny southwest.
soul of the spring-time, its light and its breath,
ring warmth to this coldness, bring life to this death;
enew the great miracle; let us behold
ie stone from the mouth of the sepulchre rolled,
nd Nature, like Lazarus, rise, as of old!
t our faith, which in darkness and coldness has lain,
evive with the warmth and the brightness again,
nd in blooming of flower and budding of tree
ie symbols and types of our destiny see;
ie life of the spring-time, the life of the whole,
nd, as sun to the sleeping earth, love to the soul!

THE MAYFLOWERS

Sad Mayflower! watched by winter stars,
And nursed by winter gales,
With petals of the sleeted spars,
And leaves of frozen sails!

What had she in those dreary hours,
Within her ice-rimmed bay,
In common with the wild-wood flowers,
The first sweet smiles of May?

Yet, "God be praised!" the Pilgrim said,
Who saw the blossoms peer
Above the brown leaves, dry and dead,
"Behold our Mayflower here!"

"God wills it: here our rest shall be,
Our years of wandering o'er;
For us the Mayflower of the sea
Shall spread her sails no more."

O sacred flowers of faith and hope,
As sweetly now as then
Ye bloom on many a birchen slope,
In many a pine-dark glen.

Behind the sea-wall's rugged length,
Unchanged, your leaves unfold,
Like love behind the manly strength
Of the brave hearts of old.

So live the fathers in their sons,
Their sturdy faith be ours,
And ours the love that overruns
Its rocky strength with flowers.

The Pilgrim's wild and wintry day
Its shadow round us draws;
The Mayflower of his stormy bay,
Our Freedom's struggling cause.

But warmer suns erelong shall bring
To life the frozen sod;
And through dead leaves of hope shall spring
Afresh the flowers of God!

FOR AN AUTUMN FESTIVAL

The Persian's flowery gifts the shrine
Of fruitful Ceres charm no more;
The woven wreaths of oak and pine
Are dust along the Isthmian shore.

But beauty hath its homage still,
And nature holds us still in debt;
And woman's grace and household skill,
And manhood's toil, are honored yet.

And we, to-day, amidst our flowers
And fruits, have come to own again
The blessings of the summer hours,
The early and the latter rain;

To see our Father's hand once more
Reverse for us the plenteous horn
Of autumn, filled and running o'er
With fruit, and flower, and golden corn!

Once more the liberal year laughs out
O'er richer stores than gems or gold;
Once more with harvest-song and shout
Is Nature's bloodless triumph told.

Our common mother rests and sings,
Like Ruth, among her garnered sheaves;
Her lap is full of goodly things,
Her brow is bright with autumn leaves.

Oh, favors every year made new!
Oh, gifts with rain and sunshine sent!
The bounty overruns our due,
The fulness shames our discontent.

We shut our eyes, the flowers bloom on;
We murmur, but the corn-ears fill,
We choose the shadow, but the sun
That casts it shines behind us still.

God gives us with our rugged soil
The power to make it Eden-fair,
And richer fruits to crown our toil
Than summer-wedded islands bear.

Who murmurs at his lot to-day?
Who scorns his native fruit and bloom?
Or sighs for dainties far away,
Beside the bounteous board of home?

Thank Heaven, instead, that Freedom's arm
Can change a rocky soil to gold, —
That brave and generous lives can warm
A clime with northern ices cold.

And let these altars, wreathed with flowers
And piled with fruits, awake again
Thanksgivings for the golden hours,
The early and the latter rain!

THE FROST SPIRIT

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit com
You may trace his foot-steps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields and
brown hill's withered brow.
He has smitten the leaves of the gray old trees wh
their pleasant green came forth,
And the winds, which follow wherever he goes, h
shaken them down to earth.

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! f
the frozen Labrador,
From the icy bridge of the Northern seas, which
white bear wanders o'er,
Where the fisherman's sail is stiff with ice, and
luckless forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into ma
statues grow!

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes!
the rushing Northern blast,
And the dark Norwegian pines have bowed as
fearful breath went past.
With an unscorched wing he has hurried on, wh
the fires of Hecla glow
On the darkly beautiful sky above and the ancien
below.

e comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! and
the quiet lake shall feel
ıe torpid touch of his glazing breath, and ring to the
skater's heel;
ıd the streams which danced on the broken rocks,
or sang to the leaning grass,
all bow again to their winter chain, and in mourn-
ful silence pass.

e comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! Let
us meet him as we may,
ıd turn with the light of the parlor-fire his evil
power away;
ıd gather closer the circle round, when that fire
light dances high,
ıd laugh at the shriek of the baffled Fiend as his
sounding wing goes by!

THE LAST WALK IN AUTUMN

I

O'ER the bare woods, whose outstretched hands
Plead with the leaden heavens in vain,
I see, beyond the valley lands,
The sea's long level dim with rain.
Around me all things, stark and dumb,
Seem praying for the snows to come,
ıd, for the summer bloom and greenness gone,
ith winter's sunset lights and dazzling morn atone.

II

Along the river's summer walk,
The withered tufts of asters nod;
And trembles on its arid stalk
The hoar plume of the golden-rod.
And on a ground of sombre fir,
And azure-studded juniper,
e silver birch its buds of purple shows,
d scarlet berries tell where bloomed the sweet wild-
rose!

III

With mingled sound of horns and bells,
A far-heard clang, the wild geese fly,
Storm-sent, from Arctic moors and fells,
Like a great arrow through the sky,
Two dusky lines converged in one,
Chasing the southward-flying sun;
While the brave snow-bird and the hardy jay
Call to them from the pines, as if to bid them stay.

IV

I passed this way a year ago:
The wind blew south; the noon of day
Was warm as June's; and save that snow
Flecked the low mountains far away,
And that the vernal-seeming breeze
Mocked faded grass and leafless trees,
I might have dreamed of summer as I lay,
Watching the fallen leaves with the soft wind at pl

V

Since then, the winter blasts have piled
The white pagodas of the snow
On these rough slopes, and, strong and wild,
Yon river, in its overflow
Of spring-time rain and sun, set free,
Crashed with its ices to the sea;
And over these gray fields, then green and gold,
The summer corn has waved, the thunder's org
rolled.

VI

Rich gift of God! A year of time!
What pomp of rise and shut of day,
What hues wherewith our Northern clime
Makes autumn's dropping woodlands gay,
What airs outblown from ferny dells,
And clover-bloom and sweetbrier smells.

hat songs of brooks and birds, what fruits and flowers,
een woods and moonlit snows, have in its round been ours!

VII

know not how, in other lands,
The changing seasons come and go;
What splendors fall on Syrian sands,
What purple lights on Alpine snow!
Nor how the pomp of sunrise waits
On Venice at her watery gates;
dream alone to me is Arno's vale,
d the Alhambra's halls are but a traveller's tale.

VIII

Yet, on life's current, he who drifts
Is one with him who rows or sails;
And he who wanders widest lifts
No more of beauty's jealous veils
Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and trees,
ls the warm Orient in the noonday air,
d from cloud minarets hears the sunset call to prayer!

IX

The eye may well be glad that looks
Where Pharpar's fountains rise and fall;
But he who sees his native brooks
Laugh in the sun, has seen them all.
he marble palaces of Ind
ise round him in the snow and wind;
m his lone sweetbrier Persian Hafiz smiles,
d Rome's cathedral awe is in his woodland aisles.

X

nd thus it is my fancy blends
The near at hand and far and rare;

And while the same horizon bends
Above the silver-sprinkled hair
Which flashed the light of morning skies
On childhood's wonder-lifted eyes,
Within its round of sea and sky and field,
Earth wheels with all her zones, the Kosmos stands revealed.

XI

And thus the sick man on his bed,
The toiler to his task-work bound,
Behold their prison-walls outspread,
Their clipped horizon widen round!
While freedom-giving fancy waits,
Like Peter's angel at the gates,
The power is theirs to baffle care and pain,
To bring the lost world back, and make it theirs again!

XII

What lack of goodly company,
When masters of the ancient lyre
Obey my call, and trace for me
Their words of mingled tears and fire!
I talk with Bacon, grave and wise,
I read the world with Pascal's eyes;
And priest and sage, with solemn brows austere,
And poets, garland-bound, the Lords of Thought, draw near.

XIII

Methinks, O friend, I hear thee say,
"In vain the human heart we mock;
Bring living guests who love the day,
Not ghosts who fly at crow of cock!
The herbs we share with flesh and blood
Are better than ambrosial food
With laurelled shades." I grant it, nothing loath,
But doubly blest is he who can partake of both.

XIV

Ie who might Plato's banquet grace,
Have I not seen before me sit,
And watched his puritanic face,
With more than Eastern wisdom lit?
hrewd mystic! who upon the back
f his Poor Richard's Almanac
iting the Sufi's song, the Gentoo's dream,
ks Manu's age of thought to Fulton's age of steam!

XV

Iere too, of answering love secure,
Have I not welcomed to my hearth
he gentle pilgrim troubadour,
Whose songs have girdled half the earth;
Vhose pages, like the magic mat
Vhereon the Eastern lover sat,
ve borne me over Rhine-land's purple vines,
l Nubia's tawny sands, and Phrygia's mountain pines!

XVI

nd he, who to the lettered wealth
Of ages adds the lore unpriced,
he wisdom and the moral health,
The ethics of the school of Christ;
he statesman to his holy trust,
s the Athenian archon, just,
ick down, exiled like him for truth alone.
he not graced my home with beauty all his own?

XVII

Vhat greetings smile, what farewells wave,
What loved ones enter and depart!
ne good, the beautiful, the brave,
The Heaven-lent treasures of the heart!
ow conscious seems the frozen sod
nd beechen slope whereon they trod!

The oak-leaves rustle, and the dry grass bends
Beneath the shadowy feet of lost or absent friends.

XVIII

Then ask not why to these bleak hills
I cling, as clings the tufted moss,
To bear the winter's lingering chills,
The mocking spring's perpetual loss.
I dream of lands where summer smiles,
And soft winds blow from spicy isles,
But scarce would Ceylon's breath of flowers be sweet
Could I not feel thy soil, New England, at my feet!

XIX

At times I long for gentler skies,
And bathe in dreams of softer air,
But homesick tears would fill the eyes
That saw the Cross without the Bear.
The pine must whisper to the palm,
The north-wind break the tropic calm;
And with the dreamy languor of the Line,
The North's keen virtue blend, and strength to beauty join.

XX

Better to stem with heart and hand
The roaring tide of life, than lie,
Unmindful, on its flowery strand,
Of God's occasions drifting by!
Better with naked nerve to bear
The needles of this goading air,
Than, in the lap of sensual ease, forego
The godlike power to do, the godlike aim to know.

XXI

Home of my heart, to me more fair
Than gay Versailles or Windsor's halls,
The painted, shingly town-house where
The freeman's vote for Freedom falls!

The simple roof where prayer is made,
The Gothic groin and colonnade;
e living temple of the heart of man,
an Rome's sky-mocking vault, or many-spired
Milan!

XXII

More dear thy equal village schools,
Where rich and poor the Bible read,
Than classic halls where Priestcraft rules,
And Learning wears the chains of Creed;
Thy glad Thanksgiving, gathering in
The scattered sheaves of home and kin,
an the mad license ushering Lenten pains,
holidays of slaves who laugh and dance in chains.

XXIII

And sweet homes nestle in these dales,
And perch along these wooded swells;
And, blest beyond Arcadian vales,
They hear the sound of Sabbath bells!
Here dwells no perfect man sublime,
Nor woman winged before her time,
; with the faults and follies of the race,
home-bred virtues hold their not unhonored place.

XXIV

Here manhood struggles for the sake
Of mother, sister, daughter, wife,
he graces and the loves which make
The music of the march of life;
nd woman, in her daily round
f duty, walks on holy ground.
unpaid menial tills the soil, nor here
he bad lesson learned at human rights to sneer.

XXV

hen let the icy north-wind blow
The trumpets of the coming storm,

To arrowy sleet and blinding snow
Yon slanting lines of rain transform.
Young hearts shall hail the drifted cold,
As gayly as I did of old;
And I, who watch them through the frosty pane,
Unenvious, live in them my boyhood o'er again.

XXVI

And I will trust that He who heeds
The life that hides in mead and wold,
Who hangs yon alder's crimson beads,
And stains these mosses green and gold,
Will still, as He hath done, incline
His gracious care to me and mine;
Grant what we ask aright, from wrong debar,
And, as the earth grows dark, make brighter ever
star!

XXVII

I have not seen, I may not see,
My hopes for man take form in fact,
But God will give the victory
In due time; in that faith I act.
And he who sees the future sure,
The baffling present may endure,
And bless, meanwhile, the unseen Hand that leads
The heart's desires beyond the halting step of deed

XXVIII

And thou, my song, I send thee forth,
Where harsher songs of mine have flown;
Go, find a place at home and hearth
Where'er thy singer's name is known;
Revive for him the kindly thought
Of friends; and they who love him not,
Touched by some strain of thine, perchance ma
take
The hand he proffers all, and thank him for th
sake.

THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

O FRIENDS! with whom my feet have trod
The quiet aisles of prayer,
Glad witness to your zeal for God
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;
Your logic linked and strong
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds:
Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

Ye praise His justice; even such
His pitying love I deem:
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods
A world of pain and loss;
I hear our Lord's beatitudes
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within
Myself, alas! I know:
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,
I veil mine eyes for shame,
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see,
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above,
I know not of His hate, — I know
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruisèd reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts He gave,
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

O brothers! if my faith is vain,
If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me that my feet may gain
The sure and safer way.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen
Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
My human heart on Thee!

NOTES AND QUESTIONS

PROEM

(Written in 1847 to introduce the first general collection of Whittier's *Poems.*)

3. **Edmund Spenser** (1552(?)–1599). One of the earliest o the great English poets, and a friend of Sidney's. Author of *Th Shepherd's Calendar*, *The Faerie Queene*, etc.

4. **Sir Philip Sidney** (1554–1586). An English poet and ro mancist. Author of *Arcadia*, *Astrophel and Stella*, etc.

32. **John Milton** (1608–1674). One of the greatest English poets. Author of *Paradise Lost.*

33. **Andrew Marvell** (1621–1678). An English poet an satirist. His *Thoughts in a Garden* are regarded as particularly graceful poetry.

SNOW-BOUND

Whittier's own Introduction to Snow-Bound. "The inmate of the family at the Whittier homestead who are referred to i the poem were my father, mother, my brother and two sisters and my uncle and aunt, both unmarried. In addition, there wa the district school master, who boarded with us. The 'not un feared, half-welcome guest' was Harriet Livermore, daughte of Judge Livermore, of New Hampshire, a young woman of fin natural ability, enthusiastic, eccentric, with slight control ove her violent temper, which sometimes made her religious profes sion doubtful. She was equally ready to exhort in school-hous prayer-meetings and dance in a Washington ballroom, while he father was a member of Congress. She early embraced the doc trine of the Second Advent, and felt it her duty to proclaim th Lord's speedy coming. With this message she crossed the Atlan tic and spent the greater part of a long life in travelling ove Europe and Asia. She lived some time with Lady Hester Stan hope, a woman as fantastic and mentally strained as herself, o the slope of Mt. Lebanon, but finally quarrelled with her i regard to two white horses with red marks on their backs whic suggested the idea of saddles, on which her titled hostess ex pected to ride into Jerusalem with the Lord. A friend of min found her, when quite an old woman, wandering in Syria with

ibe of Arabs, who, with the Oriental notion that madness is spiration, accepted her as their prophetess and leader. At the me referred to in *Snow-Bound* she was boarding at the Rocks illage, about two miles from us.

" In my boyhood, in our lonely farm-house, we had scanty urces of information; few books and only a small weekly news-aper. Our only annual was the almanac. Under such circum-ances story-telling was a necessary resource in the long winter venings. My father when a young man had traversed the wil-rness to Canada, and could tell us of his adventures with ndians and wild beasts, and of his sojourn in the French vil-ges. My uncle was ready with his record of hunting and fish-g, and, it must be confessed, with stories which he at least half elieved, of witchcraft and apparitions. My mother, who was rn in the Indian-haunted region of Somersworth, New Hamp-ire, between Dover and Portsmouth, told us of the inroads of e savages, and the narrow escape of her ancestors. She de-ribed strange people who lived on the Piscataqua and Cocheco, nong whom was Bantam the sorcerer. I have in my possession e wizard's 'conjuring book,' which he solemnly opened when nsulted. It is a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's *Magic*, printed in 51, dedicated to Doctor Robert Child, who, like Michael Scott, d learned

> 'the art of glammorie
> In Padua beyond the sea,'

d who is famous in the annals of Massachusetts, where he was one time a resident, as the first man who dared petition the eneral Court for liberty of conscience. The full title of the ook is *Three Books of Occult Philosophy: by Henry Cornelius grippa, Knight, Doctor of both Laws. Counsellor to Cæsar's acred Majesty and Judge of the Prerogative Court.*"

The Meter of Snow-Bound. Snow-Bound is written in tetram-er, that is, with four divisions or measures in each line. Each these measures, called a foot, is composed of two syllables, e first short or unaccented, the second, long or accented. Such poetic foot is called an iambus. The meter of Snow-Bound, erefore, is iambic tetrameter. The first lines of the poem are anned as follows: —

> The sún | that briéf | Decém | ber dáy
> Rose chéer | less ó | ver hílls | of gráy,
> And dárk | ly cír | cled gáve | at noón
> A sád | der líght | than wá | ning moón. |

Notes and Questions. 16. Point out the words in this first paragraph that help most to give an impression of cheerlessness — of cold.

29–30. To what mediæval character is the cock compared in these lines?

31–40. What words in this passage make the description of the snow-storm most vivid — most weird? Where do we get an impression of spirits, of mad reveling of ghosts? In lines 34–36, point out the words that describe the various movements of the snow.

41–65. Write a hundred-word description of the scene portrayed in these lines.

65. **of Pisa's leaning miracle.** The Leaning Tower of Pisa, in Italy, which inclines from the perpendicular a little more than six feet in eighty, is a campanile, or bell-tower, built of white marble, very beautiful, but so famous for its singular deflection from perpendicularity as to be known almost wholly as a curiosity.

65. Does this description of the appearance of the world agree with anything you have ever seen?

77. **rare Aladdin's wondrous cave.** For the story of Aladdin and his lamp see any edition of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, or *R.L.S.*, No. 117.

90. **Amun,** or Ammon, was an Egyptian being, representing an attribute of Deity under the form of a ram.

93–115. From what words in this paragraph do we again get a feeling of the supernatural — of the hostile influences of nature — of solitude — of a love of nature. Compare with this description of the **buried brooklet**, Lowell's description of the little ice-bound brook in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, *R.L.S.* No. 30.

116–142. Reproduce in a few words the description of the building of the fire. Consult an unabridged dictionary for *crane, trammels, andirons.* Explain their uses.

143–154. What sort of feeling does the paragraph give the reader? Explain the contrast between this paragraph and the following lines (155–174). What words or expressions do most to describe the loneliness and cold without — the cheer and warmth within?

156. What does **clean-winged** mean? What sort of wing was often used in country homes to sweep up the hearth?

175–211. What is the general subject of this paragraph?

low many of Whittier's family were living when he wrote this oem?

204. With what experiences in life are **cypress trees** associated? Where are they frequently planted?

215. **Gambia** is a British colony in western Africa inhabited hiefly by negroes.

This line and lines 220–223 are taken from *The African Chief*, poem by Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton (1759–1846). This oem was included in *The American Preceptor*, a schoolbook hich was in use in Whittier's boyhood.

217. What experience in our country's history is here referred o?

219. **Dame Mercy Warren,** a writer of poems, was the wife of ames Warren, one of the American patriots in the Revolutionry War.

243. **Isles of Shoals.** A group of islands off the coast of New Hampshire. The American poet, Celia Thaxter, made her home ere.

259. **Cocheco.** Now Dover, New Hampshire.

262–283. What are the attractive features of this beautiful escription of the mother's early life?

270. **Conjuring-book.** (See Whittier's *Introduction to Snow-ound*, page 94.)

286. Why is he called **painful Sewel?**

William Sewel was the historian of the Quakers. Charles amb seemed to have as good an opinion of the book as Whittier. n his essay, *A Quakers' Meeting*, in *Essays of Elia*, he says: Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend o you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's *History of e Quakers*. . . . It is far more edifying and affecting than anyhing you will read of Wesley or his colleagues."

289. **Thomas Chalkley** was an Englishman of Quaker parentge, born in 1675, who traveled extensively as a preacher, and nally made his home in Philadelphia. He died in 1749; his *Joural* was first published in 1747. His own narrative of the incident hich the poet relates is as follows: "To stop their murmuring, I old them they should not need to cast lots, which was usual in uch cases, which of us should die first, for I would freely offer o my life to do them good. One said, 'God bless you! I will not at any o' you.' Another said, 'He would die before he would at any of me'; and so said several. I can truly say, on that ccasion, at that time, my life was not dear to me, and that I was

serious and ingenuous in my proposition; and as I was leaning over the side of the vessel, thoughtfully considering my proposal to the company, and looking in my mind to Him that made me, a very large dolphin came up towards the top or surface of the water, and looked me in the face; and I called the people to put a hook into the sea, and take him, for here is one come to redeem me (I said to them). And they put a hook into the sea, and the fish readily took it, and they caught him. He was longer than myself. I think he was about six feet long, and the largest that ever I saw. This plainly showed us that we ought not to distrust the providence of the Almighty. The people were quieted by this act of Providence, and murmured no more. We caught enough to eat plentifully of, till we got into the capes of Delaware."

306. See Genesis xxii, 13.

307–349. A fine description of a man who loves outdoor life. Follow the lines through carefully, noting the different features of Nature touched on, and point out how our interest is held and how plainly we see the different scenes described.

310. What is a **lyceum** as the word is used in America? The Lyceum was originally a park in ancient Athens where the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, taught. The measure requires the accent *ly'ceum*, but in stricter use the accent is *lyce'um*.

320. **Apollonius Tyanæus,** a philosopher born in the first century of the Christian era, of whom many strange stories were told, especially regarding his converse with birds and animals.

322. **Hermes Trismegistus,** a celebrated Egyptian priest and philosopher, to whom was attributed the revival of geometry, arithmetic, and art among the Egyptians. He was a little later than Apollonius.

325. Does Whittier mean to commend or criticize the uncle's seeming lack of ambition?

332. **Gilbert White,** of Selborne, England, was a clergyman who wrote the *Natural History of Selborne*, a minute, affectionate, and charming description of what could be seen as it were from his own doorstep. The accuracy of his observation and the delightfulness of his manner have kept the book a classic.

337–338. How do these and the following lines show the power of narration which the uncle possessed?

355–356. What do these lines suggest as to the aunt's disposition and activities?

Put into simple language lines 366–375.

369. What is the correct pronunciation of **mirage?** How is **it** pronounced here? What does it mean?

376–377. Paraphrase these lines, so as to make clearer the expression in line 377.

378–391. Have pupils state in their own words the impression of the elder sister received from reading these lines.

386–388. What view of death does the poet here express?

390. What is meant by the **low green tent?**

Put in simpler words the meaning of lines 393–394.

395. What is the meaning of **motley-braided?**

398. **green.** Paradise is always fresh like green fields and trees.

415–437. What lines before have expressed these same feelings?

438–509. This paragraph is one of the best in the poem.

439. **The master of the district school.** This schoolmaster was George Haskell, a native of Harvard, Massachusetts, who was a Dartmouth College student at the time referred to in the poem, and afterward became a physician. Till near the end of his own life Mr. Whittier could not recall the teacher's name, and Mr. Haskell seems never to have known that he was immortalized in *Snow-Bound.*

447. **In classic Dartmouth's college halls.** Where is Dartmouth College? How near was it to Whittier's home?

450. Why is New Hampshire not a good State for farming?

453. What advantage is here suggested of a life on the farm where a boy is taught to work?

456. It was customary in the early days of America for college students to pay their expenses by teaching country schools during vacation.

464. This line refers to games played at social gatherings.

471. See line 447 for the word **classic.** In what spirit do you think the schoolmaster told the legends of Greece and Rome?

476. **Pindus** is the mountain chain which, running from north to south, nearly bisects Greece. Five rivers take their rise from the central peak, the Aoüs, the Arachthus, the Haliacmon, the Peneüs, and the Acheloüs.

485–509. Whittier drops the thread of his story for a few lines to moralize. Why was this passage particularly appropriate at the time Whittier wrote *Snow-Bound?* What solution of the negro

problem does the poet here suggest? How much of his plan and of his prophecy has been realized?

500. What does Whittier think the results of education will be? Mention two famous institutions in the South for the education of negroes. Besides the work of the public school systems in the South, much wealth is devoted in our times to aiding Southern schools. The Southern Education Board and the General Education Board are especially active in these matters. George Peabody, John D. Rockefeller, and others have given large sums of money for this purpose.

506. Is this true to-day? What war of our country fought since the Civil War tended to bring the North and South more closely together?

510–589. Read in Whittier's *Introduction to Snow-Bound*, page 94, the account of this guest, Miss Harriet Livermore. After studying the meaning of the words used to describe her in lines 510–562, write in your own language a description of his guest.

536. **Petruchio's Kate.** See Shakespeare's comedy of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

537. **Siena's saint.** St. Catherine, of Siena, who is represented as having wonderful visions. She made a vow of silence for three years.

550, etc. Find on the map the places here mentioned.

555. **The crazy Queen of Lebanon.** An interesting account of Lady Hester Stanhope, an English gentlewoman who led a singular life on Mount Lebanon in Syria, will be found in Kinglake's *Eothen*, chap. VIII.

562. This "not unfeared, half-welcome guest," Miss Harriet Livermore, at the time of this narrative was about twenty-eight years old. She once went on an independent mission to the Western Indians, whom she, in common with some others, believed to be remnants of the lost tribes of Israel, but much of her life was spent in the Orient. See the introductory note to this poem, page 94.

563–589. These lines are a sort of sermon. What is the subject of the sermon? What are the points offered in defense of this "not unfeared, half-welcome guest"?

590–613. What trait of character in Whittier's mother is here depicted?

611. How do such people as Whittier's mother try to answer their own prayers?

614–628. Point out the contrast in these beautiful lines be-

veen the wintry scene about the home and the dreams of the eepers.

629–656. What means did the country people take to clear ie roads?

639. What picture does this line give you?

646. What picture do you see here? What is there unusual in iese words?

659. The **wise old Doctor** was Dr. Weld of Haverhill, an able ian, who died at the age of ninety-six.

661. In what previous passage has Whittier spoken of his iother's willingness to help?

668. To what religious denomination did Whittier belong? See page xiii.)

669. **Calvin's creed.** Who was Calvin? What religious de· omination did he found?

670–674. The doctrine of Calvin taught that certain persons ere the elect, that is, were selected or chosen to be saved. In iese lines what does Whittier suggest as the grounds on which e shall be saved?

674. How did the snow-bound family entertain itself?

676. In early days when books were fewer than to-day the manac was more important than now and contained much formation of an encyclopædic nature.

683. What color did the Quakers largely use for their cloth-g?

683. **Thomas Ellwood,** one of the Society of Friends, a con-mporary and friend of Milton, who suggested to him the writ-g of *Paradise Regained*, wrote an epic poem in five books, lled *Davideis*, the life of King David of Israel. He wrote the ook, we are told, for his own diversion, so it was not necessary iat others should be diverted by it.

686. See 1 and 2 Samuel.

693. **Before us passed the painted Creeks.** Referring to the moval of the Creek Indians from Georgia to beyond the Mis-ssippi.

694. In 1822 **Sir Gregor McGregor,** a Scotchman, began an effectual attempt to establish a colony in Costa Rica.

697. **Taygetus** is a mountain on the Gulf of Messenia in reece, and near by is the district of Maina, noted for its rob-ers and pirates. It was from these mountaineers that Ypsilanti, Greek patriot, drew his cavalry in the struggle with Turkey hich resulted in the independence of Greece.

700. What experience had Whittier himself had with the r... Muse? (See page xv.). What lines in this passage describe most vividly the influence of the newspaper?

715–739. The story is done. The last two paragraphs are in the nature of a conclusion. From the point of view of this paragraph, where has the poet been reading these memories of the past?

739. **aloe,** the century plant which was formerly supposed to blossom only when a century old.

741. **Truce of God.** The name is drawn from a historic compact in 1040, when the Church forbade the barons to make any attack on each other between sunset on Wednesday and sunrise on the following Monday, or upon any ecclesiastical fast or feast day. It also provided that no man was to molest a laborer working in the fields, or to lay hands on any implement of husbandry, on pain of excommunication.

747. **Flemish pictures.** The Flemish school of painting was chiefly occupied with homely interiors.

740–759. Where does Whittier think that he will get his reward or satisfaction for writing this poem?

General Questions.

If you have enjoyed reading *Snow-Bound*, can you tell what part of it has attracted you most?

What would you call the main effect of the poem?

Is Whittier most capable in description, character sketch, or portrayal of sentiment?

Which would you consider the stronger, his mental qualities or his spiritual?

What passage of the poem in your opinion contains the best description? Why do you consider it the best? What passage is most religious? Most excited or violent? Most expressive of affection — of sorrow — of tolerance? What passage is most beautiful — most touching?

Gather together the passages containing references to religion or religious feeling, and make of them a statement of Whittier's religious belief. Do the same with the passages expressing his political views.

AMONG THE HILLS

2. **tawny Incas.** The Incas were the kings of the ancient Peruvians. At Yucay, their favorite residence, the gardens, according to Prescott, contained "forms of vegetable life skil-

lly imitated in gold and silver." See *History of the Conquest Peru*, I, 130.

26. The volume in which this poem stands first, and to which gives the name, was published in the fall of 1868.

110. **the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings.** The *Anti-acobin* was a periodical published in England in 1797–98, to dicule democratic opinions, and in it Canning, who afterward ecame premier of England, wrote many light verses and *jeux esprit*, among them a humorous poem called the *Needy Knife-rinder*, in burlesque of a poem by Southey. The knife-grinder anxiously appealed to to tell his story of wrong and injustice, ut answers as here: —

"Story, God bless you! I've none to tell."

121. See Ruth III.

134. **Happy Isles of prophecy.** The Fortunate Isles, or Isles the Blest, were imaginary islands in the West, in classic myth-ogy, set in a sea which was warmed by the rays of the declining n. Hither the favorites of the gods were borne, and here they velt in endless joy.

165. **Sandwich Notch, Chocorua Mountain, Ossipee Lake,** nd the **Bearcamp River** are all striking features of the scenery that part of New Hampshire which lies just at the entrance of e White Mountain region. Many of Whittier's most graceful oems are drawn from the suggestions of this country, where he ten spent the summer months, and a mountain near West ssipee has received his name.

465. The **General Court** is the official designation of the legis-tive body in New Hampshire and in Massachusetts.

SONGS OF LABOR

The *Songs of Labor* were written in 1845 and 1846, and printed rst in magazines. They reflect the working life of New England that time, before the great changes were wrought which have early put an end to some of the forms of labor, the praises of hich here are sung. The *Songs* were collected into a volume, titled *Songs of Labor and Other Poems*, in 1850, and the follow-g Dedication was then prefixed.

22. **And beauty is its own excuse.** "For the idea of this line," ys Mr. Whittier, "I am indebted to Emerson in his inimitable nnet to the Rhodora: —

"'If eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.'"

52. **St. Crispin's day.** October 25. St. Crispin and his brother Crispinian were said to be martyrs of the third century who while preaching the gospel had made their living by shoemaking.

62. **Spanish main.** A name given to the northern coast of South America when it was taken possession of by the Spaniards.

72. **the dark-eyed Florentine.** So associated was Florence, Italy, in the minds of people with the manufacture of sewing-silk, that when the industry was set up in the neighborhood of Northampton, Massachusetts, the factory village took the name of Florence.

94. **Hans Sachs.** See Longfellow's poem, *Nuremberg*, for a reference to Hans Sachs, the cobbler poet.

96. **Robert Bloomfield,** an English poet, author of *The Farmer's Boy*, was bred a shoemaker, as was William Gifford, a wit and satirist, and first editor of the *Quarterly Review*, but Gifford hated his craft bitterly.

97. **Roger Sherman,** one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was at one time a shoemaker in New Milford, Connecticut.

99. **Jacob Behmen,** or Boehme, a German visionary of the seventeenth century.

101. **George Fox,** the founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, as they are more commonly called.

117. **Crystal Mountains.** A name early given to the White Mountains from the crystals found there by the first explorers who thought them diamonds.

155. **Brador's rocks** are on the coast of Prince Edward Island.

166. **Red Island** lies in Placentia Bay, on the coast of Newfoundland.

172. **The Mickmacks** are a tribe of Indians living in and near Nova Scotia.

187. **the fish of Tobit.** See the story in the Book of Tobit, one of the Apocrypha.

358. Compare *The Ship-Builders* with Longfellow's poem *The Building of the Ship*.

497. See Genesis XLI, 2–4.

THE BAREFOOT BOY

63. **Apples of Hesperides.** The Hesperides were three nymphs who were set to guard the golden apples which Gæa (Earth) planted in the gardens of Here, as a wedding gift.

TELLING THE BEES

remarkable custom, brought from England, formerly pre-ed in the rural districts of New England. On the death of ember of the family, the bees were at once informed of the nt, and their hives were dressed in mourning. This cere-ial was supposed to be necessary to prevent the swarms n leaving their hives and seeking a new home. The scene is utely that of the Whittier homestead.

BURNS

3. **The Twa Dogs.** The title of a poem by Burns.
7–68. **Craigie-burn . . . Devon.** The names of two small rs in Scotland.
1. **Ayr . . . Doon.** Streams in southwestern Scotland.
3–76. These lines allude to Burns's poem *Is there for honest rty.* Whittier himself wrote a poem in the same spirit — *Poor Voter on Election Day.* See page 72.
7–80. Burns's poem *The Cotter's Saturday Night* is here re-ed to. Whittier's poem *Snow-Bound* is of the same *genre.*
93. **The mournful Tuscan.** Dante (1265–1321), the Italian , author of *The Divine Comedy.*
4. **Bonnie Doon.** An allusion to Burns's poem *The Banks oon.*
6. **Highland Mary.** A lass celebrated in Burns's poem of same name. She was one of the poet's sweethearts.

ABRAHAM DAVENPORT

he famous Dark Day of New England, May 19, 1780, was a sical puzzle for many years to our ancestors, but its occur-e brought something more than philosophical speculation the minds of those who passed through it. The incident of nel Abraham Davenport's sturdy protest is a matter of ry.
Mianas. The Mianus River, in Connecticut.
Stamford. A city in Connecticut.
. **The Twilight of the Gods.** In Norse mythology, the destruction of the world, when the sun would be darkened, earth would sink into the sea, and flames would lick the sky.
. **Bethany.** See John xi.

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY

In tone this poem is strongly suggestive of Burns's *Is there for honest poverty.*

THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS

17. **Tunis.** A city in the Barbary State of the same name, on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

25. **soldo.** An Italian coin, worth rather less than one cent.

KING SOLOMON AND THE ANTS

4. **Sheba's queen.** See 1 Kings x and 2 Chronicles ix.

7. **Song of songs.** The Song of Solomon, a book in the Old Testament comprising a group of love poems capable of interpretation as an allegory.

APRIL

Christabel. A poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

27. **Lazarus.** See John xi.

THE MAYFLOWERS

The trailing arbutus, or mayflower, grows abundantly in the vicinity of Plymouth, and was the first flower that greeted the Pilgrims after their fearful winter. The name "mayflower" was familiar in England, as the application of it to the historic vessel shows, but it was applied by the English, and still is, to the hawthorn. Its use in New England in connection with *Epigæa repens* dates from a very early day, some claiming that the first Pilgrims so used it, in affectionate memory of the vessel and its English flower association.

FOR AN AUTUMN FESTIVAL

2. **Ceres.** The Greek goddess of growing vegetation.

22. **Ruth.** See the Book of Ruth.

THE FROST SPIRIT

11. **Hecla.** A volcano in Iceland.

THE LAST WALK IN AUTUMN

. Compare with the description in line 62 of *Snow-Bound*.

. **Arno's vale.** The Arno valley is in northern Italy. The of Florence lies within it.

. **The Alhambra** is a famous palace, built by the Moors in lle, Spain.

. See 2 Kings v.

. **Hafiz.** A Persian poet who died about 1389.

. **Sir Francis Bacon,** an English philosopher and statesman, –1626. His *Essays* remain a classic in English literature. scientific writings foreshadowed many of the developments ter years.

. **Blaise Pascal,** a French philosopher and mathematician, –62. His *Thoughts* are still widely read.

5. **Plato,** a Greek philosopher, B.C. 427–347. His *Dialogues Republic* established him as one of the greatest thinkers of ncient world.

1. **Sufi's song.** The Sufis were the members of a sect of ics among the Mohammedans of Persia. Gentoo is another e for Brahman, the highest caste among the Hindus. The ts of the religion are drawn from this caste.

2. **Menu,** or **Manu,** was the reputed author of the *Laws*, the authoritative of the Hindu codes.

7. **the magic mat.** An allusion to the magic carpet, of the *ian Nights*.

1–125. **The statesman** was Charles Sumner.

6. **Athenian archon.** The archon was one of the chief magis- s in ancient Athens.

7. **Struck down.** An allusion to an assault upon Sumner nitted by Preston Brooks, of South Carolina, in the Senate nber.

8. **the Cross without the Bear.** The constellation of the hern Cross occupies, in the heavens south of the Equator, a ion equally conspicuous with that of the Great Bear in the nern heavens.

2. **Than gay Versailles or Windsor's halls.** A palace of the ch kings is situated at Versailles. One of the English roy- is at Windsor.

9. **Arcadian vales.** Arcadia, a rural district in Greece, ntainous and picturesque, and inhabited by a simple, con- ., pastoral people.

MAP OF THE REGION CELEBRATED IN WHITTIER'S POEM

The Riverside Literature Series

HE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

ITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, NOTES, PORTRAIT AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

AND WITH AIDS TO THE STUDY OF
THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

BY

H. A. DAVIDSON

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · DALLAS
SAN FRANCISCO
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Sketch of the Life of James Russell Lowell . . v

e Vision of Sir Launfal 1

Poems having a Special Relation to the Vision of Sir Launfal. Group A

e Search (1847) 16

Parable (1848) 18

eedom (1848) 20

nzas on Freedom (1843) 22

liolatres (1849) 23

e Present Crisis (1845) 25

W. L. Garrison (1848) 31

ndell Phillips (1842) 33

Group B

ver Brook (1849) 35

Fresco (1849) 37

Indian-Summer Reverie (1848) 40

e (1847) 52

Oak (1846) 53

Harvard Commemoration 55

recited at the Harvard Commemoration . . . 59

moriæ Positum 74

Hosea Biglow to the Editor of the Atlantic

onthly 77

First Snow-Fall 83

Changeling 85

Foot-Path 87

ddin 88

AIDS TO THE STUDY OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL
BY H. A. DAVIDSON

THE STUDY OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL . . . .
A FEW REFERENCES FOR THE STUDY OF LOWELL'S LIFE AND WORKS 1
THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE AUTHOR OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL TO OTHER WRITERS 1
TOPICS FOR STUDY 1

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

I

ELMWOOD

About half a mile from the Craigie House in Cambridge, assachusetts, on the road leading to the old town of Waterwn, is Elmwood, a spacious square house set amongst lilac d syringa bushes, and overtopped by elms. Pleasant fields on either side, and from the windows one may look out the Charles River winding its way among the marshes. e house itself is one of a group which before the war for ependence belonged to Boston merchants and officers of crown who refused to take the side of the revolutionary ty. Tory Row was the name given to the broad winding d on which the houses stood. Great farms and gardens re attached to them, and some sign of their roomy ease l remains. The estates fell into the hands of various sons after the war, and in process of time Longfellow ne to occupy Craigie House. Elmwood at that time was property of the Reverend Charles Lowell, minister of the st Church in Boston; and when Longfellow thus became neighbor, James Russell Lowell was a Junior in Harvard llege. He was born at Elmwood February 22, 1819. Any who will read *An Indian-Summer Reverie* will discover affectionately Lowell dwelt on the scenes of nature and amidst which he grew up. Indeed, it would be a pleasant to draw from the full storehouse of his poetry the golden ases with which he characterizes the trees, meadows, oks, flowers, birds, and human companions that were so

near to him in his youth and so vivid in his recollection. I his prose works also especially *My Garden Acquaintance* an *A Good Word for Winter*, Lowell has given glimpses of th outdoor life in the midst of which he grew up; and in *Cam bridge Thirty Years Ago*, many reminiscences of his earl life.

II

EDUCATION

Lowell's acquaintance with books and his schooling bega early. He learned his letters at a dame school. Mr. Willia Wells, an Englishman, opened a classical school in one of th spacious Tory Row houses near Elmwood, and, bringi with him English public school thoroughness and severit gave the boy a drilling in Latin, which he must have ma almost a native speech, to judge by the ease with which handled it afterward in mock heroics. Of course he we to Harvard College. He lived at his father's house, more th a mile away from the college yard; but this could have be no great privation to him, for he had the freedom of friends' rooms, and he loved the open air.

Lowell was but fifteen years old when he entered colle in the class which graduated in 1838. He was a reader, as many of his fellows were, and the letters which he wr shortly after leaving college show how intent he had be on making acquaintance with the best things in literatu He began also to scribble verse, and he wrote both poems a essays for college magazines. His class chose him their p for Class Day, and he wrote his poem; but he was carel about conforming to college regulations respecting atte ance at morning prayers, and for this was suspended fr college the last term of his last year, and not allowed to co back to read his poem. He was sent to Concord for rustication, and so passed a few weeks of his youth amon scenes dear to every lover of American letters.

ELMWOOD, LOWELL'S HOME, CAMBRIDGE

III

FIRST VENTURE

fter his graduation he set about the study of law, and for
ort time was even a clerk in a counting-room; but his
t was strongly toward literature. There was at that time
magazine of commanding importance in America, and
ng men were given to starting magazines with enthusiasm
very little other capital. Such a one was the *Boston*
cellany, launched by Nathan Hale, Lowell's college friend,
for this Lowell wrote gayly. It lived a year, and shortly
r Lowell himself, with Robert Carter, essayed *The*
neer in 1843. It lived just three months; but in that time
ted contributions by Lowell, Hawthorne, Whittier, Story,
, and Dr. Parsons — a group which it would be hard to
ch in any of the little magazines that hop across the
ld's path to-day. Lowell had already collected, in 1841,
poems which he had written and sometimes contributed
eriodicals into a volume entitled *A Year's Life;* but he re-
ed very little of the contents in later editions of his poems.
e book has a special interest, however, from its dedication,
eiled phrase, to Maria White. He became engaged to this
y in the fall of 1840, and the next twelve years of his life
e profoundly affected by her influence. Herself a poet of
cate power, she brought into his life an intelligent sympa-
with his work; it was, however, her strong moral enthusi-
, her lofty conception of purity and justice, which kin-
l his spirit and gave force and direction to a character
ch was ready to respond, and yet might otherwise have
ayed active expression. They were not married until 1844;
they were not far apart in their homes, and during these
rs Lowell was making those early ventures in literature,
first raids upon political and moral evil, which foretold
direction of his later work, and gave some hint of its
ndance.

bout the time of his marriage, he published two books

which by their character show pretty well the divided interest of his life. His bent from the beginning was more decidedly literary than that of any contemporary American poet. That is to say, the history and art of literature divided his interest with the production of literature, and he carried the unusual gift of a rare critical power, joined to hearty spontaneous creation. It may indeed be guessed that the keenness of judgment and incisiveness of wit which characterize his examination of literature sometimes interfered with his poetic power, and made him liable to question his art when he would rather have expressed it unchecked. One of the two books was a volume of poems; the other was a prose work, *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*. He did not keep this book alive; but it is interesting as marking the enthusiasm of a young scholar treading a way then almost wholly neglected in America, and intimating a line of thought and study in which he afterward made most noteworthy venture. Another series of poems followed in 1848, and in the same year *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. Perhaps it was in reaction from the marked sentiment of his poetry that he issued now a *jeu d'esprit*, *A Fable for Critics*, in which he hit off, with a rough and ready wit, the characteristics of the writers of the day, not forgetting himself in these lines:

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme;
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders;
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

This, of course, is but a half-serious portrait of himself, and it touches but a single feature; others can say better that Lowell's ardent nature showed itself in the series of satiric poems which made him famous, *The Biglow Papers*, written in a spirit of indignation and fine scorn, when the Mexican

ar was causing many Americans to blush with shame at the of the country by a class for its own ignoble ends. Lowell d his wife, who brought a fervid anti-slavery temper as rt of her marriage portion, were both contributors to the *erty Bell;* and Lowell was a frequent contributor to the *ti-Slavery Standard*, and was, indeed, for a while a corre-nding editor. In June, 1846, there appeared one day in *Boston Courier* a letter from Mr. Ezekiel Biglow of Jaalam the editor, Hon. Joseph T. Buckingham, inclosing a poem his son, Mr. Hosea Biglow. It was no new thing to seek to est the public attention with the vernacular applied to olic affairs. Major Jack Downing and Sam Slick had been able examples, and they had many imitators; but the der who laughed over the racy narrative of the unlettered kiel, and then took up Hosea's poem and caught the gust Yankee wrath and humor blown fresh in his face, knew t he was in at the appearance of something new in erican literature. The force which Lowell displayed in se satires made his book at once a powerful ally of an anti-very sentiment which heretofore had been ridiculed.

IV

VERSE AND PROSE

year in Europe, 1851–1852, with his wife, whose health s then precarious, stimulated his scholarly interests, and e substance to his study of Dante and Italian literature October, 1853, his wife died; she had borne him four dren: the first-born, Blanche, died in infancy, as did an-er daughter, Rose; the third child, Walter, also died ng; the fourth, a daughter, Mrs. Burnett, survived her ents. In 1855 he was chosen successor to Longfellow Smith Professor of the French and Spanish Languages Literature, and Professor of Belles-Lettres in Harvard lege. He spent two years in Europe in further preparation the duties of his office, and in 1857 was again established

in Cambridge, and installed in his academic chair. He married, also, at this time Miss Frances Dunlap, of Portland, Maine.

Lowell was now in his thirty-ninth year. As a scholar, in his professional work, he had acquired a versatile knowledge of the Romance languages, and was an adept in old French and Provençal poetry; he had given a course of twelve lectures on English poetry before the Lowell Institute in Boston, which had made a strong impression on the community, and his work on the series of *British Poets* in connection with Professor Child, especially his biographical sketch of Keats, had been recognized as of a high order. In poetry he had published the volumes already mentioned. In general literature he had printed in magazines the papers which he afterward collected into his volume, *Fireside Travels*. Not long after he entered on his college duties, the *Atlantic Monthly* was started, and the editorship given to him. He held the office for a year or two only; but he continued to write for the magazine, and in 1862 he was associated with Mr. Charles Eliot Norton in the conduct of the *North American Review*, and continued in this charge for ten years. Much of his prose was contributed to this periodical. Any one reading the titles of the papers which comprise the volumes of his prose writings will readily see how much literature, and especially poetic literature, occupied his attention. Shakespeare, Dryden, Lessing, Rousseau, Dante, Spenser, Wordsworth, Milton, Keats, Carlyle, Percival, Thoreau, Swinburne, Chaucer, Emerson, Pope, Gray — these are the principal subjects of his prose, and the range of topics indicates the catholicity of his taste.

In these papers, when studying poetry, he was very much alive to the personality of the poets, and it was his strong interest in humanity which led Lowell, when he was most diligent in the pursuit of literature, to apply himself also to history and politics. Several of his essays bear witness to this, such as *Witchcraft*, *New England Two Centuries Ago*, *A Great Public Character* (Josiah Quincy), *Abraham Lincoln*, and

great *Political Essays*. But the most remarkable of his tings of this order was the second series of *The Biglow pers*, published during the war for the Union. In these, h the wit and fun of the earlier series, there was mingled a per strain of feeling and a larger tone of patriotism. The itations of his style in these satires forbade the fullest ression of his thought and emotion; but afterward in a cession of poems, occasioned by the honors paid to student diers in Cambridge, the death of Agassiz, and the cele- tion of national anniversaries during the years 1875 and 6, he sang in loftier, more ardent strains. The most ious of these poems was his noble *Commemoration Ode*.

V

PUBLIC LIFE

t was at the close of this period, when he had done incal- able service to the Republic, that Lowell was called on to resent the country, first in Madrid, where he was sent in 7, and then in London, to which he was transferred in 0. Eight years were thus spent by him in the foreign vice of his country. He had a good knowledge of the nish language and literature when he went to Spain; but it once took pains to make his knowledge fuller and his ent more perfect, so that he could have intimate relations h the best Spaniards of the time. In England he was at e a most welcome guest, and was in great demand as a lic speaker. No one can read his dispatches from Madrid London without being struck by his sagacity, his readi- in emergencies, his interest in and quick perception of political situation in the country where he was resident, his unerring knowledge as a man of the world. Above all, vas through and through an American, true to the prin- es which underlie American institutions. His address on *ocracy*, which he delivered in England, is one of the great ements of human liberty. A few years later, after his re-

turn to America, he gave another address to his own countrymen on *The Place of the Independent in Politics*. It was a noble defence of his own position, not without a trace of discouragement at the apparently sluggish movement in American self-government of recent years, but with that faith in the substance of his countrymen which gave him the right to use words of honest warning.

The public life of Mr. Lowell made him more of a figure before the world. He received honors from societies and universities; he was decorated by the highest honors which Harvard could pay officially; and Oxford and Cambridge, St. Andrews and Edinburgh and Bologna gave gowns. He established warm personal relations with Englishmen, and after his release from public office he made several visits to England. There, too, was buried his second wife, who died in 1885. The closing years of his life in his own country, though marked by domestic loneliness and growing physical infirmities, were rich in the continued expression of his large personality and in the esteem of hosts of friends. He delivered the public address in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of Harvard University; he gave a course of lectures on the Old English Dramatists before the Lowell Institute; he collected a volume of his poems; he wrote and spoke on public affairs; and, the year before his death, revised, rearranged, and carefully edited a definitive series of his writings in ten volumes. He died at Elmwood, August 12, 1891. Since his death three small volumes have been added to his collected writings, and Mr. Norton has edited *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, in two volumes. His *Life*, in two volumes, has been written by Horace E. Scudder, and also, in one volume, by Ferris Greenslet.

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST

ER his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
st lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
en, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
st guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

See Lowell's own

> "From one stage of our being to the next
> We pass unconscious o'er a slender bridge,
> The momentary work of unseen hands." ...
> *A Glance Behind the Curtain.*

Read the first four stanzas of *Ode on Intimations of Immor-*, and notice the similarity between Wordsworth's joyous and Lowell's June. For the substitution of June for the of English poets, see the opening stanzas of *Under the Wil-*. The allusion in line 9 is rather to the thought of the entire za in the ode than to any single phrase or line.

. **Sinais climb.** See *The Study of the Vision of Sir Launfal*, **2, and Lowell's *Letters*, I, 190.**

Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the Druid wood
Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;

17. Druid wood. Poets are fond of this figure. See "Druid like device," *Indian-Summer Reverie;* also *Evangeline:*

> "The murmuring pines and the hemlocks
> Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight
> Stand like Druids of eld."

The priests of the pagan religion among the Celts, the Druids performed many rites in the woods, and the oak, especially, and the mistletoe were important in certain ceremonies. For the value attached to mistletoe growing upon an oak-tree, and for the manner of cutting it with a golden sickle, see Brand's *Popular Antiquities.* Longfellow uses this figure as a means of description, but Lowell gives to it a hidden meaning, which admirably adapts the form to the purpose of this poem. In his thought the trees of the forest have become, in this later time, the bearers of divine messages, thus taking the place of the priests who formerly found in them symbols of secret and unknown influences, potent to bless or to ban.

18. benedicite. See "old benedictions may recall" in *Fresco,* and Wordsworth's

> "The thought of our past years in me doth breed
> Perpetual benedictions."

For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean

27. The reference to the court jester of the Middle Ages is vious. For the young, the significance of the figure borrowed m the adornment of the king's fool should be interpreted by nversation and illustration.

35. Compare with Lowell's personification of spring in

"Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune."
Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line.

42. Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers. Wordsworth says, the Ode,

"The sunshine is a glorious birth,"

d he devotes the whole of the next stanza of his poem to the nifestations of this glorious birth in the abounding life of the ingtime.

To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest, —
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing, —
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue, —
'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

PART FIRST

I

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,

). Compare Lowell's expression of the joyousness of all na-
, animate and inanimate, with Wordsworth's

"And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity. . . ."

"Ye blessed creatures, I have heard the call
to each other make . . ."

Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,
And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.

II

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,
The little birds sang as if it were
The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees:
The castle alone in the landscape lay
Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray:
'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree,
And never its gates might opened be,
Save to lord or lady of high degree;
Summer besieged it on every side,
But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
She could not scale the chilly wall,
Though around it for leagues her pavilions tall
Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
Green and broad was every tent,
And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

III

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,

his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
seemed the dark castle had gathered all
ose shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
n his siege of three hundred summers long,
d, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,
Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
d lightsome as a locust-leaf,
Launfal flashed forth in his maiden mail,
seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

IV

vas morning on hill and stream and tree,
And morning in the young knight's heart;
y the castle moodily
puffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
And gloomed by itself apart;
e season brimmed all other things up
l as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's cup.

V

Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by the same,
o begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;
e sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan shrink and crawl,
d midway its leap his heart stood still
ike a frozen waterfall;
this man, so foul and bent of stature,
ped harshly against his dainty nature,
l seemed the one blot on the summer morn, —
ne tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

VI

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives but a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite, —
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
From the snow five thousand summers old;

168. In *Beaver Brook* are the lines,

> "To see how Beauty underlies
> Forevermore each form of use,"

and in *The Oak* the lines,

> "Lord! all Thy works are lessons; each contains
> Some emblem of man's all-containing soul."

The last stanza of *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* suggests in another way that all nature bears a divine message to the observant.

174. Different moods are indicated by the two Preludes. The one is of June, the other of snow and winter; in each, the poet, like an organist, strikes a key which he holds in the subsequent parts. The second Prelude should correspond in literary form and significance with the first. For a discussion of this point, see p. 98. In the letter of Mr. Hosea Biglow, pp. 77–83, the lines

On open wold and hilltop bleak
It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleafed boughs and pastures bare;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars
As the lashes of light that trim the stars;
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,
Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;

inning "Snow-flakes come whisperin' on the pane" suggest, hout parallelling, the description of winter given here.

81. In *An Indian-Summer Reverie* is a description of the er in "smooth plate-armor," . . .

"By the frost's clinking hammers forged at night."

The difference in these two descriptions lies chiefly in point of w; the little brook builds himself a house, and literally roofs bove his head. Lowell, in imagination, writes his descrip- of this winter palace of ice from within, personifying the ok as builder and inhabitant. In the other description, writ- earlier, the river is seen from above, as encased in armor and osed to the "lances of the sun." Even in the "fresh-sparred s," and "the grass-arched channels to the sun denied," in next stanza, the vision in the mind is always of the poet, or

Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond-drops,
That crystalled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:
No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas grow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly;

the reader, standing on the bank above and looking down on "the ebbing river."

In the descent of the storm-wind gathering the cold, and in the description of morning, her veins sapless and old, rising up decrepitly "for a last dim look at earth and sea," there is a haunting suggestion of the storm-blast in *The Ancient Mariner* chasing the good ship southward through mist and snow, but there is nowhere an imitation or a borrowed phrase. The true poet catches the very spirit and life from another man's work and thus enriches his own imagination. The resemblance that arises thus is elusive and difficult to trace, and is found, if at all, in a subtle similarity of atmosphere or purpose, or figurative conception, adapted to a new point of view or use.

203. The Empress of Russia, Catherine II, in a magnificent freak, built a palace of ice, which was a nine-days' wonder. Cowper has given a poetical description of it in *The Task*, Book V, lines 131–176. For Lowell's indebtedness to this poem, see p. 103.

Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
And rattles and wrings
The icy strings,
Singing, in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was "Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"
The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Build out its piers of ruddy light
Against the drift of the cold.

216. The Yule-log was anciently a huge log burned at the ast of Juul (pronounced Yule) by our Scandinavian ancestors honor of the god Thor. Juul-tid (Yule-time) corresponded in ne to Christmas tide, and when Christian festivities took the ace of pagan, many ceremonies remained. The great log, still lled the Yule-log, was dragged in and burned in the fireplace er Thor had been forgotten.

PART SECOND

I

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
For the weaver Winter its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun;
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

II

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

III

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbed air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long-ago;
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl

'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
ıen nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
e can count the camels in the sun,
s over the red-hot sands they pass
o where, in its slender necklace of grass,
ıe little spring laughed and leapt in the shade,
ıd with its own self like an infant played,
ıd waved its signal of palms.

IV

For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms;" —
ıe happy camels may reach the spring,
ıt Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,
ıe leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone,
ıat cowers beside him, a thing as lone
ıd white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
the desolate horror of his disease.

V

ıd Sir Launfal said, "I behold in thee
ı image of Him who died on the tree;
ıou also hast had thy crown of thorns,
ıou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,
ıd to thy life were not denied
ıe wounds in the hands and feet and side:
ild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
hold, through him, I give to Thee!"

VI

ıen the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he
membered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosie,

When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink:
'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown bread,
'Twas water out of a wooden bowl, —
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

VII

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate, —
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

VIII

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,

310. Lowell seems to have used here a figure first suggested by Tennyson's lines,

"music that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass."

The suggestion is remote and must be traced through Lowell's fondness for poetic phrases and an almost unconscious adaptation of the figure to the more severe land of northern cold with which he was familiar. Our poet was also familiar with the source from which Tennyson drew so much of the beautiful imagery of *The Lotos-Eaters*, *Œnone*, and other early Idylls. In a letter dated June 28, 1839, he writes: "I have found a treasure to-day

That mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was calmer than silence said,
"So, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here, — this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for Me but now;
This crust is My body broken for thee
This water His blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need:
Not what we give, but what we share, —
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three, —
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

IX

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound: —
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

X

The castle gate stands open now,
And the wanderer is welcome to the hall

a small volume of about five hundred pages; not one of your tenuated modern things that seem like milk and water *watered*, t a goodly fat little fellow and full of the choicest dainties, viz.: esiod, Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, and extracts from Orpheus d some forty others, all with a Latin translation *ad verbum*.

As the hangbird is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The Summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door,
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise;
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round;
The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command;
And there's no poor man in the North Countree
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

POEMS HAVING A SPECIAL RELATION TO THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL. GROUP A[1]

THE SEARCH

I WANT to seek for Christ,
And Nature seemed so fair
That first the woods and fields my youth enticed,
And I was sure to find him there;
The temple I forsook,
And to the solitude
Allegiance paid; but Winter came and shook
The crown and purple from my wood;
His snows, like desert sands, with scornful drift,
Besieged the columned aisle and palace-gate;
My Thebes, cut deep with many a solemn rift,
But epitaphed her own sepulchred state:
Then I remembered whom I went to seek,
And blessed blunt Winter for his counsel bleak.

[1] See *The Study of the Vision of Sir Launfal*, p. 91.

Back to the world I turned,
For Christ, I said, is King;
the cramped alley and the hut I spurned,
As far beneath his sojourning:
Mid power and wealth I sought,
But found no trace of him,
d all the costly offerings I had brought
Vith sudden rust and mould grew dim:
ound his tomb, indeed, where, by their laws,
All must on stated days themselves imprison,
cking with bread a dead creed's grinning jaws,
Vitless how long the life had thence arisen;
e sacrifice to this they set apart,
zing it more than Christ's own living heart.

So from my feet the dust
Of the proud World I shook;
en came dear Love and shared with me his crust,
nd half my sorrow's burden took.
After the World's soft bed,
Its rich and dainty fare,
e down seemed Love's coarse pillow to my head,
Iis cheap food seemed as manna rare;
sh-trodden prints of bare and bleeding feet,
urned to the heedless city whence I came,
d by I saw, and springs of worship sweet
ushed from my cleft heart smitten by the same;
e looked me in the face and spake no words,
straight I knew those footprints were the Lord's.

I followed where they led,
And in a hovel rude,
h naught to fence the weather from his head,

The King I sought for meekly stood;
A naked, hungry child
Clung round his gracious knee,
And a poor hunted slave looked up and smiled
To bless the smile that set him free;
New miracles I saw his presence do, —
No more I knew the hovel bare and poor,
The gathered chips into a woodpile grew,
The broken morsel swelled to goodly store;
I knelt and wept: my Christ no more I seek,
His throne is with the outcast and the weak.

A PARABLE

Said Christ our Lord, "I will go and see
How the men, my brethren, believe in me."
He passed not again through the gate of birth,
But made himself known to the children of earth.

Then said the chief priests, and rulers, and kings,
"Behold, now, the Giver of all good things;
Go to, let us welcome with pomp and state
Him who alone is mighty and great."

With carpets of gold the ground they spread
Wherever the Son of Man should tread,
And in palace-chambers lofty and rare
They lodged him, and served him with kingly fare.

Great organs surged through arches dim
Their jubilant floods in praise of him;
And in church, and palace, and judgment-hall,
He saw his own image high over all.

ıt still, wherever his steps they led,
ıe Lord in sorrow bent down his head,
ıd from under the heavy foundation-stones,
ıe son of Mary heard bitter groans.

ıd in church, and palace, and judgment-hall,
e marked great fissures that rent the wall,
ıd opened wider and yet more wide
the living foundation heaved and sighed.

Have ye founded your thrones and altars, then,
ı the bodies and souls of living men?
ıd think ye that building shall endure,
hich shelters the noble and crushes the poor?

Vith gates of silver and bars of gold
have fenced my sheep from their Father's fold;
ıave heard the dropping of their tears
heaven these eighteen hundred years."

) Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,
e build but as our fathers built;
hold thine images, how they stand,
vereign and sole, through all our land.

)ur task is hard, — with sword and flame
hold thine earth forever the same,
d with sharp crooks of steel to keep
ll, as thou leftest them, thy sheep."

en Christ sought out an artisan,
ow-browed, stunted, haggard man,
d a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
shed from her faintly want and sin.

These set he in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garment-hem,
For fear of defilement, "Lo, here," said he,
"The images ye have made of me!"

FREEDOM

ARE we, then, wholly fallen? Can it be
That thou, North wind, that from thy mountains bringest
Their spirit to our plains, and thou, blue sea,
Who on our rocks thy wreaths of freedom flingest,
As on an altar, — can it be that ye
Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,
Dulled with the too familiar clank of chains?
The people's heart is like a harp for years
Hung where some petrifying torrent rains
Its slow-incrusting spray: the stiffened chords
Faint and more faint make answer to the tears
That drip upon them: idle are all words:
Only a golden plectrum wakes the tone
Deep buried 'neath that ever-thickening stone.

We are not free: doth Freedom, then, consist
In musing with our faces toward the Past,
While petty cares and crawling interests twist
Their spider-threads about us, which at last
Grow strong as iron chains, to cramp and bind
In formal narrowness heart, soul, and mind?
Freedom is re-created year by year,
In hearts wide open on the Godward side,
In souls calm-cadenced as the whirling sphere,
In minds that sway the future like a tide.

o broadest creeds can hold her, and no codes;
e chooses men for her august abodes,
uilding them fair and fronting to the dawn;
et, when we seek her, we but find a few
ght footprints, leading morn-ward through the dew:
efore the day had risen, she was gone.

nd we must follow: swiftly runs she on,
nd, if our steps should slacken in despair,
alf turns her face, half smiles through golden hair,
orever yielding, never wholly won:
hat is not love which pauses in the race
vo close-linked names on fleeting sand to trace;
eedom gained yesterday is no more ours;
en gather but dry seeds of last year's flowers;
ill there's a charm ungranted, still a grace,
ill rosy Hope, the free, the unattained,
akes us Possession's languid hand let fall;
is but a fragment of ourselves is gained,
he Future brings us more, but never all.

nd, as the finder of some unknown realm,
ounting a summit whence he thinks to see
n either side of him the imprisoning sea,
holds, above the clouds that overwhelm
he valley-land, peak after snowy peak
retch out of sight, each like a silver helm
neath its plume of smoke, sublime and bleak,
nd what he thought an island finds to be
continent to him first oped, — so we
n from our height of Freedom look along
boundless future, ours if we be strong;

Or if we shrink, better remount our ships
And, fleeing God's express design, trace back
The hero-freighted Mayflower's prophet-track
To Europe entering her blood-red eclipse. [1]

STANZAS ON FREEDOM

Sung at the anti-slavery picnic in Dedham, on the anniversary of West Indian Emancipation, August 1, 1843.

Men! whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers brave and free,
If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave?
If ye do not feel the chain,
When it works a brother's pain,
Are ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Women! who shall one day bear
Sons to breathe New England air,
If ye hear, without a blush,
Deeds to make the roused blood rush
Like red lava through your veins,
For your sisters now in chains, —
Answer! are ye fit to be
Mothers of the brave and free?

Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?

[1] See Lowell's *Letters*, II, 36, for the last part of this poem originally written, and for Lowell's comment.

No! true Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

BIBLIOLATRES

owing thyself in dust before a Book,
nd thinking the great God is thine alone,
rash iconoclast, thou wilt not brook
hat gods the heathen carves in wood and stone,
s if the Shepherd who from outer cold
eads all his shivering lambs to one sure fold
ere careful for the fashion of His crook.

here is no broken reed so poor and base,
o rush, the bending tilt of swamp-fly blue,
it He therewith the ravening wolf can chase,
nd guide His flock to springs and pastures new;
hrough ways unlooked for, and through many lands,
r from the rich folds built with human hands,
he gracious footprints of His love I trace.

nd what art thou, own brother of the clod,
hat from His hand the crook would'st snatch away

And shake instead thy dry and sapless rod,
To scare the sheep out of the wholesome day?
Yea, what art thou, blind, unconverted Jew,
That with thy idol-volume's covers two
Would'st make a jail to coop the living God?

Thou hear'st not well the mountain organ-tones
By prophet ears from Hor and Sinai caught,
Thinking the cisterns of those Hebrew brains
Drew dry the springs of the All-knower's thought,
Nor shall thy lips be touched with living fire,
Who blow'st old altar-coals with sole desire
To weld anew the spirit's broken chains.

God is not dumb, that He should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
There towers the Mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone;
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
While swings the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on cliffs of cloud,
Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

[In the year 1844, which is the date of the following poem, the question of the annexation of Texas was pending, and it was made an issue of the presidential campaign then taking place. The anti-slavery party feared and opposed annexation, on account of the added strength which it would give to slavery, and the South desired it for the same reason.]

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad
earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east
to west,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within
him climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem
of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots the instantaneous throe,
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's systems to
and fro;
At the birth of each new Era, with a recognizing start,
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with mute lips
apart,
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child leaps beneath
the Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror and a chill,
Under continent to continent, the sense of coming ill,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his sympathies
with God

In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be drunk up by the sod,
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct bears along,
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or wrong;
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Humanity's vast frame
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or shame; —
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the dust against our land?

17. This figure has special force from the fact that Morse's telegraph was first put in operation a few months before the writing of this poem.

Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong,
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the beacon-moments see,
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut through Oblivion's sea;
Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers, from whose feet earth's chaff must fly;
Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne, —
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

29. Compare

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers."

BRYANT.

37. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of fate,
But the soul is still oracular; amid the market's din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within, —
"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood,
Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who have drenched the earth with blood,
Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by our purer day,
Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his miserable prey; —
Shall we guide his gory fingers where our helpless children play?

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

50. For the full story of Cyclops, which runs in suggestive phrase through these five lines, see the ninth book of the Odyssey. The translation by G. H. Palmer will be found especially satisfactory.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes, — they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward: where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves,
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a crime; —
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;
But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep
abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must
Pilgrims be.
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the
desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-
rusted key.

TO W. L. GARRISON

"Some time afterward, it was reported to me by the city officers that they had ferreted out the paper and its editor; that his office was an obscure hole, his only visible auxiliary a negro boy, and his supporters a few very insignificant persons of all colors."
— *Letter of H. G. Otis*

In a small chamber, friendless and unseen,
Toiled o'er his types one poor, unlearned young
man;
The place was dark, unfurnitured, and mean; —
Yet there the freedom of a race began.

Help came but slowly; surely no man yet
Put lever to the heavy world with less:
What need of help? He knew how types were set,
He had a dauntless spirit, and a press.

Such earnest natures are the fiery pith,
The compact nucleus, round which systems grow;
Mass after mass becomes inspired therewith,
And whirls impregnate with the central glow.

6. Archimedes, a great philosopher of antiquity, used to say, "Only give me a place to stand on, and I will move the world with my lever."

O Truth! O Freedom! how are ye still born
In the rude stable, in the manger nursed!
What humble hands unbar those gates of morn
Through which the splendors of the New Day burst!

What! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell,
Front Rome's far-reaching bolts, and scorn her frown?
Brave Luther answered YES; that thunder's swell
Rocked Europe, and discharmed the triple crown.

Whatever can be known of earth we know,
Sneered Europe's wise men, in their snail-shells curled;
No! said one man in Genoa, and that No
Out of the dark created this New World.

Who is it will not dare himself to trust?
Who is it hath not strength to stand alone?
Who is it thwarts and bilks the inward MUST?
He and his works, like sand, from earth are blown.

Men of a thousand shifts and wiles, look here!
See one straightforward conscience put in pawn
To win a world; see the obedient sphere
By bravery's simple gravitation drawn!

Shall we not heed the lesson taught of old,
And by the Present's lips repeated still,
In our own single manhood to be bold,
Fortressed in conscience and impregnable will?

We stride the river daily at its spring,
Nor, in our childish thoughtlessness, foresee,
What myriad vassal streams shall tribute bring,
How like an equal it shall greet the sea.

O small beginnings, ye are great and strong,
Based on a faithful heart and weariless brain!
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,
Ye earn the crown, and wear it not in vain.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

He stood upon the world's broad threshold; wide
The din of battle and of slaughter rose;
He saw God stand upon the weaker side,
That sank in seeming loss before its foes:
Many there were who made great haste and sold
Unto the cunning enemy their swords,
He scorned their gifts of fame, and power, and gold,
And, underneath their soft and flowery words,
Heard the cold serpent hiss; therefore he went
And humbly joined him to the weaker part,
Fanatic named, and fool, yet well content
So he could be the nearer to God's heart,
And feel its solemn pulses sending blood
Through all the widespread veins of endless good.

POEMS HAVING A SPECIAL RELATION TO THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL. GROUP B[1]

"Indeed, there could scarcely have been a better nesting place for one who was all his life long to love the animation of nature and to portray in verse and prose its homely and friendly aspects rather than its large, solemn, and expansive scenes. . . . From the upper windows of the house — that tower of enchantment for many a child — he could see a long curve of the Charles, the wide marshes beyond the river, and the fields which lay between Elmwood and the village of Cambridge. Within the place itself were the rosebushes and asters, the heavy headed goat's-beard, the lilac bushes and syringas which bordered the path from the door to what his father, in New England phrase, called the avenue, and which later became formally Elmwood Avenue. . . . And in the trees and bushes sang the birds that were to be his companions through life. Over the buttercups whistled the orioles; and bobolinks, catbirds, linnets, and robins were to teach him notes,

> The Aladdin's trap-door of the past to lift.

A spring morning which witnessed the sudden miracle of regeneration; an hour of summer, when he sat dappled with sunshine, in a cherry-tree; a day in autumn, when the falling leaves moved as an accompaniment to his thought; the creaking of the snow beneath his feet, when the familiar world was transformed as in a vision to a polar solitude:

> Instant the candid chambers of my brain
> Were painted with these sovran images;
> And later visions seem but copies pale
> From those unfading frescos of the past,
> Which I, young savage, in my age of flint,
> Gazed at, and dimly felt a power in me
> Parted from nature by the joy in her
> That doubtfully revealed me to myself."

Scudder's *James Russell Lowell*

[1] See *The Study of the Vision of Sir Launfal*, p. 91.

BEAVER BROOK

HUSHED with broad sunlight lies the hill,
And, minuting the long day's loss,
The cedar's shadow, slow and still,
Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss.

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup,
The aspen's leaves are scarce astir;
Only the little mill sends up
Its busy, never-ceasing burr.

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems
The road along the mill-pond's brink,
From 'neath the arching barberry-stems
My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood
The mill's red door lets forth the din;
The whitened miller, dust-imbued,
Flits past the square of dark within.

No mountain torrent's strength is here;
Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,
Heaps its small pitcher to the ear,
And gently waits the miller's will.

Swift slips Undine along the race
Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,
Floods the dull wheel with light and grace,
And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge round.

18. Beaver Brook was within walking distance of the poet's home See *The Nightingale in the Study* and *Mr. Hosea Biglow to the Editor of the Atlantic Monthly.*

The miller dreams not at what cost
The quivering millstones hum and whirl,
Nor how for every turn are tost
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl.

But Summer cleared my happier eyes
With drops of some celestial juice,
To see how Beauty underlies,
Forevermore each form of use.

And more; methought I saw that flood,
Which now so dull and darkling steals,
Thick, here and there, with human blood,
To turn the world's laborious wheels.

No more than doth the miller there,
Shut in our several cells, do we
Know with what waste of beauty rare
Moves every day's machinery.

Surely the wiser time shall come
When this fine overplus of might,
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,
Shall leap to music and to light.

In that new childhood of the Earth
Life of itself shall dance and play,
Fresh blood in Time's shrunk veins make mirth,
And labor meet delight half-way.

AL FRESCO

"THE MILL," 1849

THE dandelions and buttercups
Gild all the lawn; the drowsy bee
Stumbles among the clover-tops,
And summer sweetens all but me:
Away, unfruitful lore of books,
For whose vain idiom we reject
The soul's more native dialect,
Aliens among the birds and brooks,
Dull to interpret or conceive
What gospels lost the woods retrieve!
Away, ye critics, city-bred,
Who springes set of thus and so.
And in the first man's footsteps tread,
Like those who toil through drifted snow!
Away, my poets, whose sweet spell
Can make a garden of a cell!
I need ye not, for I to-day
Will make one long sweet verse of play.

Snap, chord of manhood's tenser strain!
To-day I will be a boy again;
The mind's pursuing element,
Like a bow slackened and unbent,
In some dark corner shall be leant.
The robin sings, as of old, from the limb!
The catbird croons in the lilac bush!

15. There is a delightful pair of poems by Wordsworth, *Expostulation and Reply*, and *The Tables Turned*, which show how another poet treats books and nature.

Through the dim arbor, himself more dim,
Silently hops the hermit-thrush,
The withered leaves keep dumb for him;
The irreverent buccaneering bee
Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery
Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor
With haste-dropt gold from shrine to door;
There, as of yore,
The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup
Its tiny polished urn holds up,
Filled with ripe summer to the edge,
The sun in his own wine to pledge;
And our tall elm, this hundredth year
Doge of our leafy Venice here,
Who, with an annual ring, doth wed
The blue Adriatic overhead,
Shadows with his palatial mass
The deep canals of flowing grass.

O unestrangèd birds and bees!
O face of Nature always true!
O never-unsympathizing trees!
O never-rejecting roof of blue,
Whose rash disherison never falls
On us unthinking prodigals,
Yet who convictest all our ill,
So grand and unappeasable!
Methinks my heart from each of these
Plucks part of childhood back again,
Long there imprisoned, as the breeze
Doth every hidden odor seize
Of wood and water, hill and plain;
Once more am I admitted peer

In the upper house of Nature here,
And feel through all my pulses run
The royal blood of breeze and sun.

Upon these elm-arched solitudes
No hum of neighbor toil intrudes;
The only hammer that I hear
Is wielded by the woodpecker,
The single noisy calling his
In all our leaf-hid Sybaris;
The good old time, close-hidden here,
Persists, a loyal cavalier,
While Roundheads prim, with point of fox,
Probe wainscot-chink and empty box;
Here no hoarse-voiced iconoclast
Insults thy statues, royal Past;
Myself too prone the axe to wield,
I touch the silver side of the shield
With lance reversed, and challenge peace,
A willing convert of the trees.

How chanced it that so long I tost
A cable's length from this rich coast,
With foolish anchors hugging close
The beckoning weeds and lazy ooze,
Nor had the wit to wreck before
On this enchanted island's shore,
Whither the current of the sea,
With wiser drift, persuaded me?

O, might we but of such rare days
Build up the spirit's dwelling-place!

A temple of so Parian stone
Would brook a marble god alone,
The statue of a perfect life,
Far-shrined from earth's bestaining strife.
Alas! though such felicity
In our vext world here may not be,
Yet, as sometimes the peasant's hut
Shows stones which old religion cut
With text inspired, or mystic sign
Of the Eternal and Divine,
Torn from the consecration deep
Of some fallen nunnery's mossy sleep,
So, from the ruins of this day
Crumbling in golden dust away,
The soul one gracious block may draw,
Carved with some fragment of the law,
Which, set in life's prosaic wall,
Old benedictions may recall,
And lure some nunlike thoughts to take
Their dwelling here for memory's sake.

AN INDIAN-SUMMER REVERIE

[When Mr. Lowell wrote this poem he was living at Elmwood in Cambridge, at that time quite remote from town influences, — Cambridge itself being scarcely more than a village, — but now rapidly losing its rustic surroundings. The Charles River flowed near by, then a limpid stream, untroubled by factories or sewage. It is a tidal river and not far from Elmwood winds through broad salt marshes. Mr. Longfellow's old home is a short stroll nearer town, and the two poets exchanged pleasant shots, as may be seen by Lowell's *To H. W. L.*, and Longfellow's *The Herons of Elmwood*. In *Under the Willows* Mr. Lowell has, as it were, indulged in another reverie at a later period of his life, among the same familiar surroundings.]

What visionary tints the year puts on,
When falling leaves falter through motionless air
Or numbly cling and shiver to be gone!
How shimmer the low flats and pastures bare,
As with her nectar Hebe Autumn fills
The bowl between me and those distant hills,
And smiles and shakes abroad her misty, tremulous hair!

No more the landscape holds its wealth apart,
Making me poorer in my poverty,
But mingles with my senses and my heart;
My own projected spirit seems to me
In her own reverie the world to steep;
'Tis she that waves to sympathetic sleep,
Moving, as she is moved, each field and hill and tree.

How fuse and mix, with what unfelt degrees,
Clasped by the faint horizon's languid arms,
Each into each, the hazy distances!
The softened season all the landscape charms;
Those hills, my native village that embay,
In waves of dreamier purple roll away,
And floating in mirage seem all the glimmering farms.

Far distant sounds the hidden chickadee
Close at my side; far distant sound the leaves;
The fields seem fields of dream, where Memory
Wanders like gleaning Ruth; and as the sheaves
Of wheat and barley wavered in the eye
Of Boaz as the maiden's glow went by,
So tremble and seem remote all things the sense receives.

The cock's shrill trump that tells of scattered corn,
Passed breezily on by all his flapping mates,
Faint and more faint, from barn to barn is borne,
Southward, perhaps to far Magellan's Straits;
Dimly I catch the throb of distant flails;
Silently overhead the hen-hawk sails,
With watchful, measuring eye, and for his quarry waits.

The sobered robin, hunger-silent now,
Seeks cedar-berries blue, his autumn cheer;
The chipmunk, on the shingly shagbark's bough,
Now saws, now lists with downward eye and ear,
Then drops his nut, and, with a chipping bound,
Whisks to his winding fastness underground;
The clouds like swans drift down the streaming atmosphere.

O'er yon bare knoll the pointed cedar shadows
Drowse on the crisp, gray moss; the ploughman's call
Creeps faint as smoke from black, fresh-furrowed meadows;
The single crow a single caw lets fall;
And all around me every bush and tree
Says Autumn's here, and Winter soon will be,
Who snows his soft, white sleep and silence over all.

The birch, most shy and ladylike of trees,
Her poverty, as best she may, retrieves,
And hints at her foregone gentilities
With some saved relics of her wealth of leaves;
The swamp-oak, with his royal purple on,
Glares red as blood across the sinking sun,
As one who proudlier to a falling fortune cleaves.

He looks a sachem, in red blanket wrapt,
Who, 'mid some council of the sad-garbed whites,
Erect and stern, in his own memories lapt,
With distant eye broods over other sights,
Sees the hushed wood the city's flare replace,
The wounded turf heal o'er the railway's trace,
And roams the savage Past of his undwindled rights.

The red-oak, softer-grained, yields all for lost,
And, with his crumpled foliage stiff and dry,
After the first betrayal of the frost,
Rebuffs the kiss of the relenting sky;
The chestnuts, lavish of their long-hid gold,
To the faint Summer, beggared now and old,
Pour back the sunshine hoarded 'neath her favoring eye.

The ash her purple drops forgivingly
And sadly, breaking not the general hush;
The maple-swamps glow like a sunset sea,
Each leaf a ripple with its separate flush;
All round the wood's edge creeps the skirting blaze
Of bushes low, as when, on cloudy days,
Ere the rain falls, the cautious farmer burns his brush.

O'er yon low wall, which guards one unkempt zone,
Where vines and weeds and scrub-oaks intertwine
Safe from the plough, whose rough, discordant stone
Is massed to one soft gray by lichens fine,
The tangled blackberry, crossed and recrossed, weaves
A prickly network of ensanguined leaves;
Hard by, with coral beads, the prim black-alders shine.

Pillaring with flame this crumbling boundary,
Whose loose blocks topple 'neath the ploughboy's foot,
Who, with each sense shut fast except the eye,
Creeps close and scares the jay he hoped to shoot,
The woodbine up the elm's straight stem aspires,
Coiling it, harmless, with autumnal fires;
In the ivy's paler blaze the martyr oak stands mute.

Below, the Charles, a stripe of nether sky,
Now hid by rounded apple-trees between,
Whose gaps the misplaced sail sweeps bellying by,
Now flickering golden through a woodland screen,
Then spreading out, at his next turn beyond,
A silver circle like an inland pond —
Slips seaward silently through marshes purple and green.

Dear marshes! vain to him the gift of sight
Who cannot in their various incomes share,
From every season drawn, of shade and light,
Who sees in them but levels brown and bare;
Each change of storm or sunshine scatters free
On them its largess of variety,
For Nature with cheap means still works her wonders rare.

In Spring they lie one broad expanse of green,
O'er which the light winds run with glimmering feet:
Here, yellower stripes track out the creek unseen,
There, darker growths o'er hidden ditches meet;

And purpler stains show where the blossoms crowd,
As if the silent shadow of a cloud
Hung there becalmed, with the next breath to fleet.

All round, upon the river's slippery edge,
Witching to deeper calm the drowsy tide,
Whispers and leans the breeze-entangling sedge;
Through emerald glooms the lingering waters slide,
Or, sometimes wavering, throw back the sun,
And the stiff banks in eddies melt and run
Of dimpling light, and with the current seem to glide.

In Summer 'tis a blithesome sight to see,
As, step by step, with measured swing, they pass,
The wide-ranked mowers wading to the knee,
Their sharp scythes panting through the wiry grass;
Then, stretched beneath a rick's shade in a ring,
Their nooning take, while one begins to sing
A stave that droops and dies 'neath the close sky of brass.

Meanwhile that devil-may-care, the bobolink,
Remembering duty, in mid-quaver stops
Just ere he sweeps o'er rapture's tremulous brink,
And 'twixt the winrows most demurely drops,
A decorous bird of business, who provides
For his brown mate and fledglings six besides,
And looks from right to left, a farmer 'mid his crops.

Another change subdues them in the Fall,
But saddens not; they still show merrier tints,
Though sober russet seems to cover all;
When the first sunshine through their dewdrop glints,
Look how the yellow clearness, streamed across,
Redeems with rarer hues the season's loss,
As Dawn's feet there had touched and left their rosy prints.

Or come when sunset gives its freshened zest,
Lean o'er the bridge and let the ruddy thrill,
While the shorn sun swells down the hazy west,
Glow opposite; — the marshes drink their fill
And swoon with purple veins, then slowly fade
Through pink to brown, as eastward moves the shade,
Lengthening with stealthy creep, of Simond's darkening hill.

Later, and yet ere Winter wholly shuts,
Ere through the first dry snow the runner grates,
And the loath cart-wheel screams in slippery ruts,
While firmer ice the eager boy awaits,
Trying each buckle and strap beside the fire,
And until bedtime plays with his desire,
Twenty times putting on and off his new-bought skates; —

Then, every morn, the river's banks shine bright
With smooth plate-armor, treacherous and frail,

By the frost's clinking hammers forged at night,
'Gainst which the lances of the sun prevail,
Giving a pretty emblem of the day
When guiltier arms in light shall melt away,
And states shall move free-limbed, loosed from war's cramping mail.

And now those waterfalls the ebbing river
Twice every day creates on either side
Tinkle, as through their fresh-sparred grots they shiver
In grass-arched channels to the sun denied;
High flaps in sparkling blue the far-heard crow,
The silvered flats gleam frostily below,
Suddenly drops the gull and breaks the glassy tide.

But crowned in turn by vying seasons three,
Their winter halo hath a fuller ring;
This glory seems to rest immovably, —
The others were too fleet and vanishing;
When the hid tide is at its highest flow,
O'er marsh and stream one breathless trance of snow
With brooding fulness awes and hushes everything.

The sunshine seems blown off by the bleak wind,
As pale as formal candles lit by day;
Gropes to the sea the river dumb and blind;
The brown ricks, snow-thatched by the storm in play,
Show pearly breakers combing o'er their lee,
White crests as of some just enchanted sea,
Checked in their maddest leap and hanging poised midway.

But when the eastern blow, with rain aslant,
From mid-sea's prairies green and rolling plains
Drives in his wallowing herds of billows gaunt,
And the roused Charles remembers in his veins
Old Ocean's blood and snaps his gyves of frost,
That tyrannous silence on the shores is tost
In dreary wreck, and crumbling desolation reigns.

Edgewise or flat, in Druid-like device,
With leaden pools between or gullies bare,
The blocks lie strewn, a bleak Stonehenge of ice;
No life, no sound, to break the grim despair,
Save sullen plunge, as through the sedges stiff
Down crackles riverward some thaw-sapped cliff,
Or when the close-wedged fields of ice crunch here and there.

But let me turn from fancy-pictured scenes
To that whose pastoral calm before me lies:
Here nothing harsh or rugged intervenes;
The early evening with her misty dyes
Smooths off the ravelled edges of the nigh,
Relieves the distant with her cooler sky,
And tones the landscape down, and soothes the wearied eyes.

There gleams my native village, dear to me,
Though higher change's waves each day are seen,
Whelming fields famed in boyhood's history,
Sanding with houses the diminished green;
There, in red brick, which softening time defies,
Stand square and stiff the Muses' factories; —
How with my life knit up is every well-known scene!

Flow on, dear river! not alone you flow
To outward sight, and through your marshes wind;
Fed from the mystic springs of long-ago,
Your twin flows silent through my world of mind:
Grow dim, dear marshes, in the evening's gray!
Before my inner sight ye stretch away,
And will forever, though these fleshly eyes grow blind.

Beyond the hillock's house-bespotted swell,
Where Gothic chapels house the horse and chaise,
Where quiet cits in Grecian temples dwell,
Where Coptic tombs resound with prayer and praise,
Where dust and mud the equal year divide,
There gentle Allston lived, and wrought, and died,
Transfiguring street and shop with his illumined gaze.

Virgilium vidi tantum, — I have seen
But as a boy, who looks alike on all,
That misty hair, that fine Undine-like mien,
Tremulous as down to feeling's faintest call; —
Ah, dear old homestead! count it to thy fame
That thither many times the Painter came; —
One elm yet bears his name, a feathery tree and tall.

223. In *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*, which treats in prose of much the same period as this poem reproduces, Mr. Lowell has given more in detail his recollections of Washington Allston, the painter. The whole paper may be read as a prose counterpart to this poem. It is published in *Fireside Travels*.

225. **Virgilium vidi tantum**, I barely saw Virgil, a Latin phrase applied to one who has merely had a glimpse of a great man.

227. Undine is the heroine of a romantic tale by Baron De la Motte Fouqué. She is represented as a water-nymph who wins a human soul only by a union with mortality which brings pain and sorrow.

Swiftly the present fades in memory's glow, —
Our only sure possession is the past;
The village blacksmith died a month ago,
And dim to me the forge's roaring blast;
Soon fire-new mediævals we shall see
Oust the black smithy from its chestnut-tree,
And that hewn down, perhaps, the bee-hive green and vast.

How many times, prouder than king on throne,
Loosed from the village school-dame's A's and B's,
Panting have I the creaky bellows blown,
And watched the pent volcano's red increase,
Then paused to see the ponderous sledge, brought down
By that hard arm voluminous and brown,
From the white iron swarm its golden vanishing bees.

Dear native town! whose choking elms each year
With eddying dust before their time turn gray,
Pining for rain, — to me thy dust is dear;
It glorifies the eve of summer day,
And when the westering sun half sunken burns,
The mote-thick air to deepest orange turns,
The westward horseman rides through clouds of gold away,

So palpable, I've seen those unshorn few,
The six old willows at the causey's end

234. The village blacksmith of Longfellow's well-known poem. The prophecy came true as regards the hewing-down of the chestnut-tree, which was cut down in 1876.

(Such trees Paul Potter never dreamed nor drew),
Through this dry mist their checkering shadows send,
Striped, here and there, with many a long-drawn thread,
Where streamed through leafy chinks the trembling red,
Past which, in one bright trail, the hangbird's flashes blend.

Yes, dearer far thy dust than all that e'er,
Beneath the awarded crown of victory,
Gilded the blown Olympic charioteer;
Though lightly prized the ribboned parchments three,
Yet *collegisse juvat*, I am glad
That here what colleging was mine I had, —
t linked another tie, dear native town, with thee!

Nearer art thou than simply native earth,
My dust with thine concedes a deeper tie;
A closer claim thy soil may well put forth,
Something of kindred more than sympathy;
For in thy bounds I reverently laid away
That blinding anguish of forsaken clay,
That title I seemed to have in earth and sea and sky,

264. **Collegisse juvat.** Horace in his first ode says, *Curriculo ulverem Olympicum Collegisse juvat;* that is, *It's a pleasure to ave collected* the dust of Olympus on your carriage-wheels. Mr. owell, helping himself to the words, says, "It's a pleasure to ave been at college"; for college in its first meaning is a *col-ction* of men, as in the phrase "The college of cardinals."

That portion of my life more choice to me
(Though brief, yet in itself so round and whole)
Than all the imperfect residue can be; —
The Artist saw his statue of the soul
Was perfect; so, with one regretful stroke,
The earthen model into fragments broke,
And without her the impoverished seasons roll.

HEBE

I saw the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bending.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on, by sweet degrees
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim Fates;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates
On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp; –
The beaker fell; the luck was over.

275. The volume containing this poem was reverently dedicated "To the ever fresh and happy memory of our little Blanche."

The Earth had drunk the vintage up;
What boots it patch the goblet's splinters?
Can Summer fill the icy cup,
Whose treacherous crystal is but Winter's?

O spendthrift haste! await the Gods;
Their nectar crowns the lips of Patience;
Haste scatters on unthankful sods
The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon her;
Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.

THE OAK

What gnarlèd stretch, what depth of shade, is his!
There needs no crown to mark the forest's king;
How in his leaves outshines full summer's bliss!
Sun, storm, rain, dew, to him their tribute bring,
Which he with such benignant royalty
Accepts, as overpayeth what is lent;
All nature seems his vassal proud to be,
And cunning only for his ornament.

How towers he, too, amid the billowed snows,
An unquelled exile from the summer's throne,
Whose plain, uncinctured front more kingly shows,
Now that the obscuring courtier leaves are flown.
His boughs make music of the winter air,
Jewelled with sleet, like some cathedral front
Where clinging snow-flakes with quaint art repair
The dints and furrows of time's envious brunt.

How doth his patient strength the rude March wind
  Persuade to seem glad breaths of summer breeze,
And win the soil that fain would be unkind,
  To swell his revenues with proud increase!
He is the gem; and all the landscape wide
  (So doth his grandeur isolate the sense)
Seems but the setting, worthless all beside,
  An empty socket, were he fallen thence.

So, from oft converse with life's wintry gales,
  Should man learn how to clasp with tougher roots
The inspiring earth; how otherwise avails
  The leaf-creating sap that sunward shoots?
So every year that falls with noiseless flake
  Should fill old scars up on the stormward side,
And make hoar age revered for age's sake,
  Not for traditions of youth's leafy pride.

So, from the pinched soil of a churlish fate,
  True hearts compel the sap of sturdier growth,
So between earth and heaven stand simply great,
  That these shall seem but their attendants both;
For nature's forces with obedient zeal
  Wait on the rooted faith and oaken will;
As quickly the pretender's cheat they feel,
  And turn mad Pucks to flout and mock him still.

Lord! all Thy works are lessons; each contains
  Some emblem of man's all-containing soul;
Shall he make fruitless all Thy glorious pains,
  Delving within Thy grace an eyeless mole?

40. See Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Make me the least of thy Dodona-grove, 45
Cause me some message of thy truth to bring,
Speak but a word through me, nor let thy love
Among my boughs disdain to perch and sing.

THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION

"The Commemoration services (July 21, 1865) took place in the open air, in the presence of a great assembly. Prominent among the speakers were Major-General Meade, the hero of Gettysburg, and Major-General Devens. The wounds of the war were still fresh and bleeding, and the interest of the occasion was deep and thrilling. The summer afternoon was drawing to its close when the poet began the recital of the ode. No living audience could for the first time follow with intelligent appreciation the delivery of such a poem. To be sure, it had its obvious strong points and its sonorous charms; but, like all the later poems of the author, it is full of condensed thought and requires study. The reader to-day finds many passages whose force and beauty escaped him during the recital, yet the effect of the poem at the time was overpowering. The face of the poet, always singularly expressive, was on this occasion almost transfigured,— glowing, as if with an inward light. It was impossible to look away from it. Our age has furnished many great historic scenes, but this Commemoration combined the elements of grandeur and pathos, and produced an impression as lasting as life. Of the merits of the ode it is perhaps too soon to speak. In nobility of sentiment and sustained power it appears to take rank among the first in the language. To us, with the memories of the war in mind, it seems more beautiful and of a finer quality than the best of Dryden's. What the people of the coming centuries will say, who knows? We only know that the auditors, scholars and soldiers alike, were dis-

45. A grove of oaks at Dodona, in ancient Greece, was the seat of a famous oracle.

solved in admiration and tears." (Underwood's *James Russell Lowell.*)

The chapter entitled "Lowell and the War for the Union" in Scudder's *Biography of Lowell* should be read as an introduction to the study of the *Commemoration Ode.* A passage in one of Lowell's letters, 8 December, 1868, reveals the mood in which the poem was written and the intensity of feeling that inspired it. The letter was addressed to the author of a review of the volume of verse which included the ode, and the passage reads as follows:

"I am not sure if I understand what you say about the tenth strophe. You will observe that it leads naturally to the eleventh, and that I there justify a certain narrowness in it as an expression of the popular feeling as well as my own. I confess I have never got over the feeling of wrath with which (just after the death of my nephew Willie) I read in an English paper that nothing was to be hoped of an army officered by tailor's apprentices and butcher boys. The poem was written with a vehement speed, which I thought I had lost in the skirts of my professor's gown. Till within two days of the celebration I was hopelessly dumb, and then it all came with a rush, literally making me lean (*mi fece magro*), and so nervous that I was weeks in getting over it. I was longer in getting the new (eleventh) strophe to my mind than in writing the rest of my poem. In *that* I hardly changed a word, and it was so undeliberate that I did not find out till after it was printed that some of the verses lacked corresponding rhymes. . . . I had put the ethical and political view so often in prose that I was weary of it. The motives of the war? I had impatiently urged them again and again — but for an ode they must be in the blood and not the memory."

In 1886, in a letter to R. W. Gilder, Lowell describes the composition of this ode and the effect of the effort upon himself. He says:

"The passage about Lincoln was not in the ode as originally recited, but added immediately after. More than eighteen months before, however, I had written about Lin

coln in the *North American Review* — an article which pleased him. I did divine him earlier than most men of the Brahmin caste. The ode itself was an improvisation. Two days before the Commemoration I had told my friend Child that it was impossible — that I was dull as a doormat. But the next day something gave me a jog and the whole thing came out of me with a rush. I sat up all night writing it out clear, and took it on the morning of the day to Child. 'I have something, but don't yet know what it is, or whether it will do. Look at it and tell me.' He went a little way apart with it under an elm-tree in the college yard. He read a passage here and there, brought it back to me, and said, 'Do? I should think so! Don't you be scared.' And I wasn't, but virtue enough had gone out of me to make me weak for a fortnight after. I was amazed at the praises I got. Trevelyan told me afterwards that he never could have carried through the abolition of purchase in the British Army but for the reinforcement he got from that poem."

The study of the versification of *Commemoration Ode* reveals many of Lowell's theories in regard to the adaptation of measures, stanzaic forms, etc., to the spirit of the poem, on the one hand, and on the other to the manner of his presentation. He believed that an author in composing his verses must adapt his measures to recitation, that is to the ear; or to the eye, that is to reading, as the case might be. The Memorial Odes were composed for recitation, and the poet's own words best disclose how this purpose influenced him in the selection and adaptation of conventional verse forms. He writes:

"The poems [*Three Memorial Poems*] were all intended for public recitation. That was the first thing to be considered. I suppose my ear (from long and painful practice on poems) has more technical practice in this than almost any. The least tedious measure is the rhymed heroic, but this, too, palls unless relieved by passages of wit or even mere fun. A long series of uniform stanzas (I am always speaking of public recitation) with regularly recurring rhymes produces som-

nolence among the men and a desperate resort to their fans on the part of the women. No method has yet been invented by which the train of thought or feeling can be shunted off from the epical to the lyrical track. My ears have been jolted often enough over the sleepers on such occasions to know that. I know *something* (of course an American can't know much) about Pindar. But *his* odes had the advantage of being chanted. Now, my problem was to contrive a measure which should not be tedious by uniformity, which should vary with varying moods, in which the transitions (including those of the voice) should be managed without jar. I at first thought of mixed rhymed and blank verses of unequal measures, like those in the choruses of *Samson Agonistes*, which are in the main masterly. Of course, Milton deliberately departed from that stricter form of Greek Chorus to which it was bound quite as much (I suspect) by the law of its musical accompaniment as by any sense of symmetry. I wrote some stanzas of the *Commemoration Ode* on this theory at first, leaving some verses without a rhyme to match. But my ear was better pleased when the rhyme, coming at a longer interval, as a far-off echo rather than instant reverberation, produced the same effect almost, and yet was grateful by unexpectedly recalling an association and faint reminiscence of consonance. I think I have succeeded pretty well, and if you will try reading aloud I believe you would agree with me." For changes and emendations suggested by Lowell but never incorporated in the ode, see *Letters*, II, 141–143. Another description of this scene will be found in A. V. G. Allen's *Life and Letters of Phillips Brooks*, I, 552. The prayer of Phillips Brooks seemed to those present the great event of the day, the noblest expression of the deep, suppressed emotion that stirred the hearts of all.

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION

DEDICATED

"To the ever sweet and shining memory of the ninety-three sons of Harvard College who have died for their country in the war of nationality."

I

Weak-winged is song,
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:
Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
And offered their fresh lives to make it good:
No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates

With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The VERITAS that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;
But these, our brothers, fought for her,
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:

37. An early emblem of Harvard College was a shield with Veritas (truth) upon three open books. This device is still used.

Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her.
Where faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,

Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,
Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night,
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthy dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day;
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still glimmering from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds;
But up the steep, amid the wrath

And shock of deadly hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword
Dreams in its easeful sheath;
But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baäl's stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"
Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,

Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!

vi. This stanza was not recited; it was composed immediately after the public delivery of the ode and included in it. It cannot be called an afterthought, for the noble lines express and carry to a climax the intense feeling which animates the entire poem, and in Lowell's own mind was the very soul of the words that fell from his lips.

They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human-kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting morn-ward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;

These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal name it masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap,
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,
Shall win man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we enwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our best; —
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:
I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge, and die away in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not. — Say not so!
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;

246. "In the privately printed edition of the poem the names of eight of the poet's kindred are given. The nearest in blood are his nephews, General Charles Russell Lowell, killed at Winchester, Lieutenant James Jackson Lowell, at Seven Pines, and Captain William Lowell Putnam, at Ball's Bluff. Another relative was the heroic Colonel Robert G. Shaw, who fell in the assault on Fort Wagner." (Underwood's *James Russell Lowell.*)

253. See the *Book of Numbers*, chapter XIII.

Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No bar of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack:
I see them muster in a gleaming row,
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song?
Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoicèd now and insubstantial things,
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,
Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,

255. Compare Gray's line in *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*,

"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Tennyson uses the same words, but with different and nobler meaning, in his *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*.

To darkness driven by that imperious gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift and range!
Shall we to more continuance make pretence?
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but woe:
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.
But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
Save to make green their little length of sods,
Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
Was dying all they had the skill to do?
That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
Such short-lived service, as if blind events
Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;
She claims a more divine investiture
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
Gives eyes to mountains blind,
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
For soul inherits all that soul could dare:
Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
The single deed, the private sacrifice,
So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,

Is covered up ere long from mortal eyes
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;
But that high privilege that makes all men peers,
That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger's height,
And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow more bright,
That swift validity in noble veins,
Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
Of being set on flame
By the pure fire that flies all contact base,
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
These are imperishable gains,
Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
These hold great futures in their lusty reins
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X

Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier!
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
They flit across the ear:
That is best blood that hath most iron in't,
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
How poor their outworn coronets,

Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,
Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

XI

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude,
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head!
Lofty be its mood and grave,
Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation:
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation!
'Tis no Man we celebrate,
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
For her time of need, and then
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,

Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes, and fears,
If his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, advance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies, that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmful shore.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her mighty knees
She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas."

XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow,
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

MEMORIÆ POSITUM

R. G. SHAW

Beneath the trees,
My lifelong friends in this dear spot,
Sad now for eyes that see them not,
I hear the autumnal breeze
Wake the dry leaves to sigh for gladness gone,
Whispering vague omens of oblivion,
Hear, restless as the seas,
Time's grim feet rustling through the withered grace
Of many a spreading realm and strong-stemmed race,
Even as my own through these.

Why make we moan
For loss that doth enrich us yet
With upward yearnings of regret?
Bleaker than unmossed stone
Our lives were but for this immortal gain
Of unstilled longing and inspiring pain!
As thrills of long-hushed tone
Live in the viol, so our souls grow fine
With keen vibrations from the touch divine
Of noble natures gone.

1. This poem is printed here on account of its relation to the *Commemoration Ode;* see note, p. 57. The same memories inspired the stanza in *Mr. Hosea Biglow's Letter*, etc.

'Twere indiscreet
To vex the shy and sacred grief
With harsh obtrusions of relief;
Yet, Verse, with noiseless feet,
Go whisper: "*This* death hath far choicer ends
Than slowly to impearl in hearts of friends;
These obsequies 'tis meet
Not to seclude in closets of the heart,
But, church-like, with wide doorways, to impart
Even to the heedless street."

II

Brave, good, and true,
I see him stand before me now,
And read again on that young brow,
Where every hope was new,
How sweet were life! Yet, by the mouth firm-set,
And look made up for Duty's utmost debt,
I could divine he knew
That death within the sulphurous hostile lines,
In the mere wreck of nobly-pitched designs,
Plucks heart's-ease, and not rue.

Happy their end
Who vanish down life's evening stream
Placid as swans that drift in dream
Round the next river-bend!
Happy long life, with honor at the close,
Friends' painless tears, the softened thought of foes!
And yet, like him, to spend
All at a gush, keeping our first faith sure
From mid-life's doubt and eld's contentment poor,
What more could Fortune send?

Right in the van,
On the red rampart's slippery swell,
With heart that beat a charge, he fell
Foeward, as fits a man;
But the high soul burns on to light men's feet
Where death for noble ends makes dying sweet;
His life her crescent's span
Orbs full with share in their undarkening days
Who ever climbed the battailous steeps of praise
Since valor's praise began.

III

His life's expense
Hath won him coeternal youth
With the immaculate prime of Truth;
While we, who make pretence
At living on, and wake and eat and sleep,
And life's stale trick by repetition keep,
Our fickle permanence
(A poor leaf-shadow on a brook, whose play
Of busy idlesse ceases with our day)
Is the mere cheat of sense.

We bide our chance,
Unhappy, and make terms with Fate
A little more to let us wait;
He leads for aye the advance,
Hope's forlorn-hopes that plant the desperate good
For nobler Earths and days of manlier mood;
Our wall of circumstance
Cleared at a bound, he flashes o'er the fight,
A saintly shape of fame, to cheer the right
And steel each wavering glance.

I write of one,
While with dim eyes I think of three;
Who weeps not others fair and brave as he?
Ah, when the fight is won,
Dear Land, whom triflers now make bold to scorn,
(Thee! from whose forehead Earth awaits her morn,)
How nobler shall the sun
Flame in thy sky, how braver breathe thy air,
That thou bred'st children who for thee could dare
And die as thine have done!

MR. HOSEA BIGLOW TO THE EDITOR OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

[When the war for the Union broke out, Mr. Lowell contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* a second series of *Biglow Papers*, and just before the close of the war published the poem that follows.]

Dear Sir, — Your letter come to han'
Requestin' me to please be funny;
But I ain't made upon a plan
Thet knows wut's comin', gall or honey:
Ther' 's times the world doos look so queer,
Odd fancies come afore I call 'em;
An' then agin, for half a year,
No preacher 'thout a call's more solemn.

You're 'n want o' sunthin' light an' cute,
Rattlin' an' shrewd an' kin' o' jingleish,
An' wish, pervidin' it 'ould suit,
I'd take an' citify my English.

I *ken* write long-tailed, ef I please, —
  But when I'm jokin', no, I thankee;
Then, 'fore I know it, my idees
  Run helter-skelter into Yankee.

Sence I begun to scribble rhyme,
  I tell ye wut, I hain't ben foolin';
The parson's books, life, death, an' time
  Hev took some trouble with my schoolin';
Nor th' airth don't git put out with me,
  Thet love her 'z though she wuz a woman;
Why, th' ain't a bird upon the tree
  But half forgives my bein' human.

An' yit I love th' unhighschooled way
  Ol' farmers hed when I wuz younger;
Their talk wuz meatier, an' 'ould stay,
  While book-froth seems to whet your hunger;
For puttin' in a downright lick
  'Twixt Humbug's eyes, ther' 's few can metch it,
An' then it helves my thoughts ez slick
  Ez stret-grained hickory doos a hetchet.

But when I can't, I can't, thet's all,
  For Natur' won't put up with gullin';
Idees you hev to shove an' haul
  Like a druv pig ain't wuth a mullein:
Live thoughts ain't sent for; thru all rifts
  O' sense they pour an' resh ye onwards,
Like rivers when south-lyin' drifts
  Feel thet th' old airth's a-wheelin' sunwards.

Time wuz, the rhymes come crowdin' thick
  Ez office-seekers arter 'lection,

An' into ary place 'ould stick
  Without no bother nor objection;
But sence the war my thoughts hang back
  Ez though I wanted to enlist 'em,
An' subs'tutes — *they* don't never lack,
  But then they'll slope afore you've mist 'em.

Nothin' don't seem like wut it wuz;
  I can't see wut there is to hender,
An' yit my brains jes' go buzz, buzz,
  Like bumblebees agin a winder;
'Fore these times come, in all airth's row,
  Ther' wuz one quiet place, my head in,
Where I could hide an' think, — but now
  It's all one teeter, hopin', dreadin'.

Where's Peace? I start, some clear-blown night,
  When gaunt stone walls grow numb an' number,
An', creakin' 'cross the snow-crus' white,
  Walk the col' starlight into summer;
Up grows the moon, an' swell by swell
  Thru the pale pasturs silvers dimmer
Than the last smile thet strives to tell
  O' love gone heavenward in its shimmer.

I hev ben gladder o' sech things
  Than cocks o' spring or bees o' clover,
They filled my heart with livin' springs,
  But now they seem to freeze 'em over;
Sights innercent ez babes on knee,
  Peaceful ez eyes o' pastur'd cattle,
Jes' coz they be so, seem to me
  To rile me more with thoughts o' battle.

In-doors an' out by spells I try;
  Ma'am Natur' keeps her spin-wheel goin',
But leaves my natur' stiff and dry
  Ez fiel's o' clover arter mowin';
An' her jes' keepin' on the same,
  Calmer 'n a clock, an' never carin',
An' findin' nary thing to blame,
  Is wus than ef she took to swearin'.

Snow-flakes come whisperin' on the pane,
  The charm makes blazin' logs so pleasant,
But I can't hark to wut they're say'n',
  With Grant or Sherman ollers present;
The chimbleys shudder in the gale,
  Thet lulls, then suddin takes to flappin'
Like a shot hawk, but all's ez stale
  To me ez so much sperit-rappin'.

Under the yaller-pines I house,
  When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-scented,
An' hear among their furry boughs
  The baskin' west-wind purr contented,
While 'way o'erhead, ez sweet an' low
  Ez distant bells thet ring for meetin',
The wedged wil' geese their bugles blow,
  Further an' further South retreatin'.

Or up the slippery knob I strain
  An' see a hundred hills like islan's
Lift their blue woods in broken chain
  Out o' the sea o' snowy silence;
The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on airth,
  Slow thru the winter air a-shrinkin'

Seem kin' o' sad, an' roun' the hearth
  Of empty places set me thinkin'.

Beaver roars hoarse with meltin' snows,
  An' rattles di'mon's from his granite;
Time wuz, he snatched away my prose,
  An' into psalms or satires ran it;
But he, nor all the rest thet once
  Started my blood to country-dances,
Can't set me goin' more'n a dunce
  Thet hain't no use for dreams an' fancies.

Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street
  I hear the drummers makin' riot,
An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
  Thet follered once an' now are quiet, —
White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
  Thet never knowed the paths o' Satan,
Whose comin' step ther' 's ears thet won't,
  No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.

Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee?
  Didn't I love to see 'em growin',
Three likely lads ez wal could be,
  Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu knowin'?
I set an' look into the blaze
  Whose natur', jes' like theirn, keeps climbin',
Ez long 'z it lives, in shinin' ways,
  An' half despise myself for rhymin'.

Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth
  On War's red techstone rang true metal,

105. Beaver Brook, a tributary of the Charles.

Who ventered life an' love an' youth
  For the gret prize o' death in battle?
To him who, deadly hurt, agen
  Flashed on afore the charge's thunder,
Tippin' with fire the bolt of men
  Thet rived the Rebel line asunder?

'Tain't right to hev the young go fust,
  All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces,
Leavin' life's paupers dry ez dust
  To try an' make b'lieve fill their places:
Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,
  Ther' 's gaps our lives can't never fay in,
An' *thet* world seems so fur from this
  Lef' for us loafers to grow gray in!

My eyes cloud up for rain; my mouth
  Will take to twitchin' roun' the corners;
I pity mothers, tu, down South,
  For all they sot among the scorners:
I'd sooner take my chance to stan'
  At Jedgment where your meanest slave is,
Than at God's bar hol' up a han'
  Ez drippin' red ez yourn, Jeff Davis!

Come, Peace! not like a mourner bowed
  For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,
But proud, to meet a people proud,
  With eyes thet tell o' triumph tasted!
Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,
  An' step thet proves ye Victory's daughter!
Longin' for you, our sperits wilt
  Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for water.

Come, while our country feels the lift
Of a gret instinct shoutin' "Forwards!"
An' knows thet freedom ain't a gift
Thet tarries long in han's o' cowards!
Come, sech ez mothers prayed for, when
They kissed their cross with lips thet quivered,
An' bring fair wages for brave men,
A nation saved, a race delivered!

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL

[In a letter to Sydney H. Gay, dated Elmwood, December 22, 1849, Lowell wrote: "Print *that* as if you loved it. Let not a comma be blundered. Especially I fear they will put '*gleaming*' for '*gloaming*' in the first line unless you look to it. May you never have the key which shall unlock the whole meaning of the poem to you!"]

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails were softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

9. The marble of Carrara, Italy, is noted for its purity.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

THE CHANGELING

I HAD a little daughter,
And she was given to me
To lead me gently backward
To the Heavenly Father's knee,
That I, by the force of nature,
Might in some dim wise divine
The depth of his infinite patience
To this wayward soul of mine.

I know not how others saw her,
But to me she was wholly fair,
And the light of the heaven she came from
Still lingered and gleamed in her hair;
For it was as wavy and golden,
And as many changes took,
As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples
On the yellow bed of a brook.

To what can I liken her smiling
Upon me, her kneeling lover,
How it leaped from her lips to her eyelids,
And dimpled her wholly over,
Till her outstretched hands smiled also,
And I almost seemed to see
The very heart of her mother
Sending sun through her veins to me!

She had been with us scarce a twelve-month,
And it hardly seemed a day,

When a troop of wandering angels
Stole my little daughter away;
Or perhaps those heavenly Zingari
But loosed the hampering strings,
And when they had opened her cage-door,
My little bird used her wings.

But they left in her stead a changeling,
A little angel child,
That seems like her bud in full blossom,
And smiles as she never smiled:
When I wake in the morning, I see it
Where she always used to lie,
And I feel as weak as a violet
Alone 'neath the awful sky.

As weak, yet as trustful also;
For the whole year long I see
All the wonders of faithful Nature
Still worked for the love of me;
Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,
Rain falls, suns rise and set,
Earth whirls, and all but to prosper
A poor little violet.

This child is not mine as the first was,
I cannot sing it to rest,
I cannot lift it up fatherly
And bliss it upon my breast:
Yet it lies in my little one's cradle
And sits in my little one's chair,
And the light of the heaven she's gone to
Transfigures its golden hair.

THE FOOT-PATH

It mounts athwart the windy hill
  Through sallow slopes of upland bare,
And Fancy climbs with foot-fall still
  Its narrowing curves that end in air.

By day, a warmer-hearted blue
  Stoops softly to that topmost swell;
Its thread-like windings seem a clue
  To gracious climes where all is well.

By night, far yonder, I surmise
  An ampler world than clips my ken,
Where the great stars of happier skies
  Commingle nobler fates of men.

I look and long, then haste me home,
  Still master of my secret rare;
Once tried, the path would end in Rome,
  But now it leads me everywhere.

Forever to the new it guides,
  From former good, old overmuch;
What Nature for her poets hides,
  'Tis wiser to divine than clutch.

The bird I list hath never come
  Within the scope of mortal ear;
My prying step would make him dumb,
  And the fair tree, his shelter, sear.

Behind the hill, behind the sky,
  Behind my inmost thought, he sings;
No feet avail; to hear it nigh,
  The song itself must lend the wings.

Sing on, sweet bird, close hid, and raise
  Those angel stairways in my brain,
That climb from these low-vaulted days
  To spacious sunshines far from pain.

Sing when thou wilt, enchantment fleet,
  I leave thy covert haunt untrod,
And envy Science not her feat
  To make a twice-told tale of God.

ALADDIN

When I was a beggarly boy,
  And lived in a cellar damp,
I had not a friend nor a toy,
  But I had Aladdin's lamp;
When I could not sleep for the cold,
  I had fire enough in my brain,
And builded, with roofs of gold,
  My beautiful castles in Spain!

Since then I have toiled day and night,
  I have money and power good store,
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright
  For the one that is mine no more;
Take, Fortune, whatever you choose,
  You gave, and may snatch again;
I have nothing 'twould pain me to lose,
  For I own no more castles in Spain!

AIDS TO THE STUDY OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

BY H. A. DAVIDSON

THE STUDY OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

LOWELL's interpretation of the poet's mission is given in his own words in a letter to his friend, C. F. Briggs, dated February 18, 1846. He writes, ". . . my calling is clear to me. I am never lifted up to any peak of vision — and moments of almost fearful inward illumination I have sometimes — but that when I look down in hope to see some valley of the Beautiful Mountains, I behold nothing but blackened ruins; and the moans of the downtrodden the world over — but chiefly here in our own land — come up to my ear, instead of the happy songs of the husbandmen reaping and binding the sheaves of light; yet these, too, I hear not seldom. Then I feel how great is the office of poet, could I but even dare to hope to fill it. Then it seems as if my heart would break in pouring out one glorious song that should be the gospel of Reform, full of consolation and strength to the oppressed, yet falling gently and restoringly as dew on the withered youth-flowers of the oppressor. That way my madness lies, if any."

The same conception of the poet's high mission as a leader of reform finds expression in many of Lowell's early poems, especially those in a small volume entitled *A Year's Life:*

> "Never had poets such high call before,
> Never can poets hope for higher one,
> . . . . . .
> For he who settles Freedom's principles
> Writes the death-warrant of all tyranny;
> Who speaks the truth stabs Falsehood to the heart."
>
> From *L'Envoi*

But the true inspiration of *The Vision of Sir Launfal* must be sought in Lowell's relation to the anti-slavery cause in its birth hour. With the enthusiasm of early love and superabundant vitality, the young poet entered the lists as the champion of the downtrodden and the oppressed. The movement led by Garrison and Phillips and a score of devoted men was to him none other than a holy crusade. He bewailed the necessity which compelled him to receive money for the contributions of his pen; in his own thought, his words were the expression of burning conviction, poured forth in behalf of fellow beings — even the lowliest and most oppressed.

It is significant that twice in Lowell's life the composition of great poems at fever heat, in an incredibly short space of time, followed many months of polemical writing in prose on the same subject. It would seem as if the man had sweated over his ideas and wrought them into phrases apt to express his meaning until, in his own words, they passed from his memory into the blood, when suddenly the poet's brain took fire, and transmuted into song the deep conviction and the heartfelt emotion of the philanthropist. In the year preceding the composition of the *Commemoration Ode*, in January, July, and October, the *North American Review* contained political articles from his pen, dealing with the issues involved in Mr. Lincoln's candidacy for reëlection. Of this and other poems belonging in the same group he writes, "My blood was up and you would hardly believe me if I were to tell how few hours intervened between conception and completion, even in so long a one as *Mason and Slidell.* So I have a kind of faith that the 'Ode' is right because it was *there*, I hardly knew how. . . . I had put the ethical and political view so often in prose that I was weary of it. The motives of the war? I had impatiently argued them again and again — but for an ode they must be in the blood, not in the memory."

Once before, in Lowell's life, a period of hot partisanship and polemical argument had been followed by the concep-

tion and swift composition of a beautiful poem, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, in which the poet's zeal for the anti-slavery cause found expression. From the beginning, Lowell had conceived of the attempt to root slavery out of the land of the free as a holy crusade; and when, in 1846, he became a regular contributor to *The Standard*, the organ of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he entered on his task as on a holy warfare. He insisted on the privilege of sending contributions either in prose or in verse, as the humor seized him or the muse inspired. During the time that Lowell wrote for this periodical — about four years — his pen was the servant of an almost chivalrous loyalty and devotion to the cause he and his wife had espoused. In different form, prose and poetry alike breathed the same urgent message; when the poet's imagination took fire and he sought a theme for a longer poem than he had yet written, the form of a parable came to his mind, in which the leper at the gate, gruesome, repulsive, and rejected, was no other than the black slave.

Two groups of poems hold an intimate relation to *The Vision of Sir Launfal* and serve to interpret the hidden meaning of the legend. In one of these groups are other poems, written in this period of Lowell's life in the mood that inspired *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. The most significant of these will be found in Group A, pages 16–33. The story of Sir Launfal's adventure is, in truth, the parable of a holy crusade; the knight going forth in search of the Grail reaches his goal, not in the land where Christ was buried, but at the very door of his own castle in the North Countree, when he shared his crust with the loathsome, gruesome thing he saw at his side, and the revealing light fell clear around him. *The Search* (February, 1847) is almost a parallel, a commentary, for *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, the futile search for Christ ending in a "hovel rude" where

> "The King I sought for meekly stood:
> A naked, hungry child
> Clung round his gracious knee

And a poor hunted slave looked up and smiled,
To bless the smile that set him free."

This is the leper by Sir Launfal's gate in the North Countree.

In *A Parable* (May, 1848), said Christ our Lord:

"Have ye founded your thrones and altars, then,
On the bodies and souls of living men?
And think ye that building shall endure,
Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor?"
. . . . . .
. . . "Lo, here," said he,
The images ye have made of me."

And Christ set in the midst of those who named his name, the poet says, creatures so low and degraded that the hem of the garment was drawn back lest it should be defiled.

In *Bibliolatres* (May, 1849), Lowell cried out in passionate impatience with men who worship "light ancestral" and at the same time turn deaf ears to the moaning of the oppressed:

"What art thou, own brother of the clod,[1]
Bowing thyself in dust before a Book,
And thinking the great God is thine alone?
God is not dumb that He should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
There towers the mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find." . . .

Here, also, we find the mountain that strives with the faint-hearted, the Sinai that we daily climb, not heeding, in

. . . "mountain organ-tones
By prophet ears from Hor and Sinai caught." . . .

A sentence in a letter written by Lowell in September, 1848, suggests the typical significance, in his mind, of the mountain in the wilderness, Sinai: — "We may reach our Promised Land; but it is far behind us in the Wilderness, in the early time of struggle, that we have left our Sinais and our personal talk with God in the bush."

[1] The order of the lines in the poem has not been preserved here.

In *Freedom* (June, 1848), "the great winds utter prophecies":

> "Are we, then, wholly fallen? Can it be
> That thou, North wind, that from thy mountains bringest,
> Their spirit to our plains, and thou, blue sea,
> Who on our rocks thy wreaths of freedom flingest,
> As on an altar, — can it be that ye
> Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,
> Dulled with the too familiar clank of chains?"

"Fallen and traitor lives" characterize those descendants of the men that came in the "hero-freighted Mayflower" who shrink back, fleeing God's express design. The beautiful figure of Freedom fleeing morn-ward with light footsteps, gone before the day has risen, is lost in the strenuous urgency of the moralist.

The Present Crisis (December, 1845), that noblest of all Lowell's poems, is the epitome of the very spirit of our Pilgrim forefathers, at the same time great, and narrow, and prophetic of the future. In words thrilling with passionate conviction and enkindled with imagination, the poet lifts the strife of his own time into the plain of world history, and it becomes infinitely great because it marks one step in the advance of the human race.

> "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
> In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
> Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
> . . . . . .
> And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
> One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
> Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned."

Careful study of Lowell's prose in the files of *The Standard*, in connection with poems written approximately at the same time, would reveal a close parallel, also, between the expression of conviction in the form of argument and the embodiment in verse of enthusiasm and emotion arising from

conviction; but this is a subject inviting to the critical reader rather than a task for the school room.

But were the expression of conviction, the hidden meaning of the parable, the only purpose dear to the poet's heart in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, it would not be the noble poem it is. Deep conviction may be the soul of the beautiful work of art in any medium, be it language, or marble, or color, or sound, but it cannot of itself become the essential characteristic of the art form chosen as the means of expression. There must be some imaginative organization of thought to make it a fit subject for a work of art, and the form chosen must be adorned and enriched, as the artist is able, by every means suited to his need which tradition and usage have sanctioned as forms of expression for artistic truth or beauty. *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, serving as an expression of Lowell's belief in the obligation of human being to fellow human being, is nevertheless, intimately, the overflowing of a poet's heart full of the love of nature and the mood of youth. On this side, *The Vision of Sir Launfal* may be studied best in connection with another group of poems belonging also to the same period of early manhood and happiness as the prose and the longer poem. It is especially to note the poet's fondness for the high-tide of the year in June that a number of these poems (Group B, pages 34–88) are included in this volume and referred to here. The material of his observation is essentially the same in the several poems, and the reader feels the note of genuine experience and emotion in the spontaneous, untroubled repetition from various points of view.

Beaver Brook (*The Mill*, January, 1849) is the brook of the second prelude in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, and in the poem Lowell expresses again the belief which is the keynote of his improvisation in *A Day in June*, that "Beauty underlies forevermore each form of use." *Al Fresco* is full of haunting echoes of descriptions of nature in older verse which had enriched the poet's brain: the "hermit thrush," the "buccaneering bee," the "nunnery of the lily," and, more than all, the

subtler reference to the thought pervading Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*, in

"To-day I will be a boy again,"

and to his own first prelude in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, in

"What gospels lost the woods retrieve."

The first paragraphs of *Under the Willows* read like another version of "And what is so rare as a day in June."

"June is the pearl of our New England year."
"June! Dear June! Now God be praised for June."

The description of the coming of spring in *Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line*, of the waking up of "Northun natur', slow and apt to doubt," is a close parallel in selection, even in phrase, to the descriptions of the same time of year in *Under the Willows* and in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. "The robin is plastering his house hard by," in one poem; in the other, when "the gray hossches'nuts leetle hands unfold, the robin-redbreast, mindful of his 'almanick,' goes to plast'rin his adobë house." The identity in mood and in detail of observation is no less marked that in one, the hangbird flashes; in another the bobolink, the soul of the sweet season, swings. In each poem Lowell varies his choice of phrase or illustration to suit the point of view chosen and the purpose in mind, but the rhythmic pulse attuning the heart of the poet to "the natural way of living" is always the same.

These poems illustrate, also, Lowell's fondness for his own phrases and conceits, and show the frequency with which he repeats himself; perchance, as well, the reason why he so often found the poetic muse "Invita Minerva." In *Beaver Brook* "Warm noon brims full the valley's cup"; in *An Indian-Summer Reverie* "Hebe Autumn fills the bowl between me and those distant hills"; and in *Al Fresco* "The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup Its tiny polished urn holds up, Filled with ripe summer to the edge."

In *Under the Willows*, the poet says, "What a day to sun me and do nothing"; in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, "We sit in the warm shade and feel how the sap creeps up"; and

Hosea Biglow in the spring "allus feels the sap start in his veins."

The poet's first love is always given to the bobolink. Hosea Biglow writes:

> "... June's bridesman, poet o' the year,
> Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here;
> Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he swings,
> Or climbs aginst the breeze with quiverin' wings."

In the coming of spring among the willows, the swallow and the bluebird are no more than forerunners for the true poet of song.

> "But now, oh rapture! sunshine winged and voiced,
> . . . . . .
> Gladness of woods, skies, waters, all in one,
> The bobolink has come, and, like the soul
> Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,
> Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what. . . ."

There is no space here for tracing further Lowell's habit of repeating forms of expression in different poems for similar ideas, and of using over conceits adapted now to one poetic or imaginative point of view, now to another. The illustrations that have been given are no more than suggestions for wider reading and comparison such as any pupil fond of poetry may carry out.

Lowell calls all his war poems improvisations. This seems to be his own characterization of the moment of creation which combined in imaginative unity material long familiar to his thought in other form. In *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, he chose to make improvisation personified in the musing organist building "a bridge from Dreamland for his lay" the mould of form for the poem. Thus the main theme is expressed in a narrative held within another narrative form so slight that it slips away from the reader completely as he goes on. When the opening of Part Second appears the word "Prelude" recalls him, but seems scarcely justified. In *The Ancient Mariner*, Coleridge has employed the same literary device, but with infinitely greater skill. Now and again, the wedding guest, an enforced listener, is brought to the reader's

attention, and so perfect is this narrative form, which serves as setting for the tale the mariner tells, that the critic may note each typical step of progress from beginning to moment of climax and conclusion, clearly marked but distinct from the narrative art of the tale itself, which has also its own complete, well-arranged sequence and organization as plot.

In *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, the figure of improvisation is shown first in the gradual approach of the poet to the subject of his narrative. True, he begins with a generalized statement of his theme — "We Sinais climb and know it not," but this is introduced in the form of a protest. It is not true, as Wordsworth intimates, that heaven recedes from the growing boy as he leaves infancy far behind. Few readers perceive — striving to catch the somewhat obscure meaning — the significance of these words as the announcement, remote and far away, of the real theme of the poem. Then the poet passes on to specify the influences in all nature, animate and inanimate, which strive with the heart of man that he may be led from the wilderness to the mountain heights where the soul talks face to face, as Moses of old, with God. It is but a step from description of these divine influences, manifest in the beauty and teeming life of June, to their effect on the hearts of men — which at last brings the improvisator to the goal he had in mind from the first, the beginning of his narrative. Then the generalization is dropped in a moment, and henceforth an illustration, in the single instance, of the great truth he has tried to phrase, is substituted. We follow in concrete example the story of how nature and his own heart and many varied experiences compelled one man along the upward way, until, after a weary interval, the light shone around him and he lifted his downward gaze to discover that, unwittingly, he had climbed his Sinai and found the Lord.

Lowell marks the thematic improvisation threading his poem by prolonging the influence of springtime and June into the dream. The June day, introduced first as a manifestation

of the divinity that dwells in all nature and finds expression in beauty and life, becomes then the influence that moved the knight to the keeping of his vow, and lingered in his memory as he lay on the rushes in his own courtyard. When he fell asleep, the little birds of spring sang on in his dream, and it was, in his vision, as in reality, the one perfect day of all the year. Thus has the poet, advancing, retreating, illustrating, built a bridge, not from, but into, Dreamland, for his lay. The picture of summer in siege around the dark castle, representative of the man's heart before the call to remember his vow came to him, repeats in variation, mingling with the thread of the narrative, the description of the June day, and suggests the *motive* insistently, so that it remains in the mind, as in music the theme holds the ear and is the compelling or dominant note.

The Prelude to Part Second of *The Vision of Sir Launfal* seems to be an attempt to return to the point of view of the improvisator and to create an artistic parallel to the first prelude. Beautiful as are the lines descriptive of the descent of winter from the mountain and the housing of the little brook in his palace of ice, they nevertheless fail of the artistic purpose which the poet designed them to fulfil in his plan. The reasons for this failure must be indicated with the utmost brevity. The attempt to lead the imagination outside of the dream, to the point of view of the improvisator, is unsuccessful, because the moment the reader pictures Sir Launfal sitting at his own gate, cold and shelterless, the parts of the scene are inevitably reversed, and the preceding description of winter and storm becomes no more than the setting of the picture, subordinate to the figure of the old man. In the Prelude to Part First this reversal of parts when the element of human interest enters does not occur, for two reasons; first, the description leads up to the narrative and serves as a means of introduction, and, secondly, the motive which is the beginning of the slight plot, the stirring of purpose in the heart of the knight, is supplied by this means. In Part Second the narrative is under way, the imagination

of the reader is fully committed to it, and there has been no reminder that the action of the story has reality only in the visions of the sleeping knight. The description, further, supplies no motive for the incidents that follow. The attempt to build out of it a contrast in the manner of the earlier figure is not convincing for lack of intimate correspondence between the figure and the meaning. The winter palace in no way typifies or motives the spiritual experience of the returning knight; the contrast between the frost and cold without the castle and the cheering glow of warmth from within seems superficial and unreal, since the life and light of a new spiritual purpose are in the heart of the man on the outside and must enter with him when at last the siege of summer is over.

For similar reasons, the awakening of Sir Launfal at the end fails to quicken the imagination. The narrator has done his work too well. Readers have followed the progress of the tale with such belief in the reality of the passage of time that the mind refuses to turn back or to exchange the thin figure of the old man for the youthful knight who rode forth in the morning. The effort is made difficult by a belief rooted in the minds of us all that such charity and humility as Sir Launfal showed when for the second time he met the leper, arise in proud hearts only after long and bitter experience. The very wording of the conclusion, "The Summer's long siege at last is o'er," lends itself to the persuasion of the mind that the experience of Sir Launfal was a real one, and the result, namely that mingling of new-born purpose and sympathy which ripens only in the flight of years, adds conviction.

In passing, we should note that one element of an ideally arranged narrative is entirely lacking in the story of the poem. Lowell gives his tale a definite beginning and motives sufficiently the going forth of the knight, but he does not indicate, even by remote suggestion, the experiences that changed his spirit and sent him back the humble servant of the lowliest human need. The reminiscent memory of the old man

and the contrast between his earlier and later self go far to supply the omission, and doubtless the difficulty of rounding the narrative without lessening the force of the truth the poet would convey was too great. *The Vision of Sir Launfal* is so full of beauty in all its parts, and so derived from the very sun and wind and bloom of our own land, so instinct with the history and spirit of a young nation, that we all must love it and cherish it in the memory, not in the spirit of criticism, but as a choice inheritance.

A FEW REFERENCES FOR THE STUDY OF LOWELL'S LIFE AND WORKS

James Russell Lowell, a Biography, by H. E. Scudder. In volume I, chapters I–IV are especially important in the study of The Vision of Sir Launfal. In chapter IV are many quotations which interpret the meaning of phrases in the poem.

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THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE AUTHOR OF THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL TO OTHER WRITERS

The following note accompanied the first publication of *The Vision of Sir Launfal* in 1848, and was retained by Lowell in all subsequent editions:

"According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Greal, or Holy Grail, was the cup out of which Jesus Christ partook of the last supper with his disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration, for many years in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but, one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the Knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. Sir Galahad was at last successful in finding it, as may be read in the seventeenth book of the Romance of King Arthur. Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of the most exquisite of his poems.

"The plot (if I may give that name to anything so slight) of the following poem is my own, and, to serve its purposes, I have enlarged the circle of competition in search of the miraculous cup in such a manner as to include not only other persons than the heroes of the Round Table, but also a period of time subsequent to the date of King Arthur's reign."

For the Legend. Lowell's indebtedness to old tales of quests for the Holy Grail was general and indefinite. He

drew from mediæval literature, with which he was intimately acquainted, a typical outline for the narrative of his own invention, and the traditions that have made the search for the Grail a symbol of consecration to some noble end enabled him to embody a hidden ethical purpose in his tale. The name of his knight appears in one form and another in the romances of the Middle Ages. This form of it is most commonly associated with the metrical romance entitled *Launfal*, by Sir Thomas Chestre, published in the reign of Henry VI, and now to be found in volume I of Ritson's *Ancient English Metrical Romances*. The tale is a free and enlarged version of some French romance, and it relates amorous adventures of the knight Sir Launfal, or Lancelot, in another spelling, in which King Arthur and Queen Guinevere appear. From it Lowell borrowed no more than the name.

For poetic figures and conceits. The poet's indebtedness to Wordsworth and to Cowper is far greater. Each of these poets touched his imagination, and he re-minted in poetic fervor the figures and fancies of their poems, but no idea or vision came from him unchanged. The indebtedness is in that subtle form to be traced only through the creative imagination. His brain reproduced in form of vision idyllic pictures corresponding to the words he read. The phrases slipped away, but the creations called up by them remained a possession of his mind, and stimulated activity of the same kind. With true poetic instinct, he transmuted each fancy into the scenes and the detail of nature familiar by observation. If one reads the earlier poems of these authors and, immediately after, Lowell's preludes, there comes to the critical sense a strong impression of greater condensation, closer organization of material, and lighter, freer handling of phrase and fancy in the work of the American poet. Thus he made good his own words, " 'Tis his at last who has said it best."

The source of the inspiration of the Prelude to Part First, both in rich detail and in deeper meaning, cannot be mistaken.

Suggestions for comparison of this prelude with Wordsworth's Ode will be found elsewhere. In Cowper's *The Task*, Book V, "The Winter Morning Walk," lines 97–176, are descriptions that suggest the very figures and fancies of the Prelude to Part Second. The quotation of a few lines will illustrate, and also suggest comparison at greater length:

> "... On the flood,
> Indurated and fixed, the snowy weight
> Lies undissolved; while silently beneath,
> And unperceived, the current steals away.
> . . . . . .
> And see where it has hung the embroidered banks
> With forms so various, that no powers of art,
> The pencil or the pen, may trace the scene;
> Here glittering turrets rise, uprearing high
> (Fantastic misarrangement!) on the roof
> Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees
> And shrubs of fairy land. The crystal drops
> That trickle down the branches, fast congealed,
> Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
> And prop the pile they but adorned before."

Here, perhaps, is the suggestion of Lowell's **steel-stemmed trees.**

TOPICS FOR STUDY

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST

1. In what is the key to the artistic presentation of the Prelude?
2. What is the plan of the Prelude?
3. **Builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay** is a figure of speech in which the poet wishes each one of us to recognize a parallel between something that takes place in the mind of the organist seated at his instrument and the real act of the figure. Find as many parts of the parallel as you can. Do you notice any respect in which the parallel is not a good one?
4. **Nearer draws his theme.** What did the poet mean by **his theme,** — the story, or the purpose in the story, or something else? What is the meaning of **nearer draws,** here?
5. What is the thought in the mind of the poet which is illustrated by the figure **faint auroral flushes**?

NOTE. — In answer, describe faint auroral flushes, or flashes, as seen in the sky; then describe the process in the mind indicated by the words **theme draws nearer.** Finally, point out any resemblances between the two which make the figure a fit one for the poet's use.

6. What did Wordsworth mean when he said that heaven is especially about the soul of the young child?

In lines 11 and 12, Lowell means that older persons, year by year, come nearer to heaven in another way; if you would understand these lines and their relation to the story that follows, answer the following questions carefully, in order:

a. Where is Mount Sinai, geographically?

b. How long ago did the incident in the history of the Jews to which Lowell refers take place?

c. For what did the leader of the tribes go up into the mountain? Why did he go alone?

NOTE. — See page 89 for Lowell's figurative use of the mountain in other poems.

d. Why was this incident important in the life of the Jewish nation?

e. How many reasons can you find for describing the process by which any one becomes daily better and more noble as climbing Sinai?

f. What did Lowell mean when he said we climb our Sinais with **souls that cringe and plot?**

7. In the third paragraph, Lowell describes in a poetic way five influences which seem to plead with every one who feels them to live more nearly in accord with his highest ideals. Name and describe in plain English words these influences. Are they different influences, or different forms of the same influence?

8. Explain especially the meaning in:

a. **Our fallen and traitor lives.**

NOTE. — For one explanation, see Lowell's poem *Freedom.*

b. **prophecies,** uttered by great winds?

9. Why did the poet call men faint-hearted? What did he mean by the striving of the mountain with the faint heart?

10. Can you show whether **Druid** is a fit adjective for woods? For what special reason did Lowell choose it here? For the use of this word in other poetry, see p. 2.

11. What is the dictionary meaning of the Latin word **benedicite?** What part of the church service does it suggest?
12. If this figure, in lines 17, 18, is borrowed from the church service, can you explain the four parts, the waiting wood, the outstretched arms, the benedicite, the worshippers?
13. Can you explain the parallel between the figure and the meaning in lines 19, 20, in the same way?
14. **Earth gets its price for what earth gives us** is a general statement which Lowell illustrates by particulars. Name in order the illustrations he chooses and for each ask:
    a. What the words mean literally.
    b. Whether the statement is true in life as you know it; give illustrations of your own, if you can.

    NOTE. — Earth is a figure by which one thing is used for another entirely different because it suggests the idea, or has come by common consent to stand for it. The personification of Earth is an aid in conveying this transferred meaning, and this figure is carried out in conceit of bargain and price paid. Other expressions, the **Devil's dross, a cap and bells,** etc., must be understood in the same figurative way.
15. Lines 29–32 are arranged in contrast with lines 21–28, at every point. In these lines:
    a. Underline every phrase which seems to you hard to understand; as, **ounce of dross, Devil's booth,** etc.
    b. Think what meaning each phrase has in your own mind, and write an explanation of it with illustration, as you would for a friend who could see no meaning in the poetic language used.
    c. Find as many points of contrast between lines 29–32 and lines 21–28 as you can.
16. What connection have these lines with the beginning of Prelude to Part First, lines 1–12?
17. **A Day in June.** How is this beautiful description of a day in June prepared for and introduced in the preceding stanza?
18. Why was Lowell unwilling to pass at once from his prelude to his narrative?
19. Show the plan or organization of this description by lines, and also how the poet leads the reader easily from one division to the next.

    NOTE. — Lowell leads readers to the acceptance of the

point of view he desires in this prelude by many steps of transition. In a large way, the poetic paragraphs divide in meaning into three parts. In the first, the poet narrates with genuine feeling how with the turn of the year and the strengthening warmth of the sun, life, like a high tide, floods the old channels, stirring first in the clod, then climbing and spreading until the wide view palpitates and thrills. Then, by the easiest transition, he tells how the new life of springtime affects all the happy creatures of the world out of doors. Then, again, by the figure of the tide flooding back **into every bare inlet, and creek, and bay,** he leads our thought to the influence of the season on the emotions and feelings of the human heart. He dwells in detail upon the multitudinous ways in which human beings respond to the quickening of life and activity in nature. The renewal of health and hope begets an impulse to achieve, and the soul lies open to inspirations that will lead to renewed purpose and effort. Thus, at length, we accept the suggestion of the poet, that from the divine influence in nature, the striving of the mountain, the benedicite of the Druid-wood, the tender beauty of June, came the impulse to the heart of Sir Launfal to remember the keeping of his vow. Poetic diction is often obscure and indirect as a means of expressing thought, and the questions below are intended to aid students in the interpretation of the hidden meaning of the poet.

20. **The high tide of the year.** Let each student describe from his own experience and memory the earliest signs of returning spring at the end of winter, and the changes that follow until the time of full bloom.
21. What two things did Lowell personify in the first paragraph of this description? How did he create a personal relation for these personifications? In what is it shown?
22. Add other suitable and beautiful illustrations of the poet's thought from your own observation. Lowell chose the illustrations and figures for this poem from the immediate surroundings of his own home at Elmwood, for a description of which see pages v, vi.
23. Compare this description with Lowell's description of spring in other poems in:
    a. The things observed and enjoyed most.

b. In the order in which details are introduced.

c. In the observer's point of view.

NOTE. — This topic (No. 23) may be omitted if the poems referred to in the discussion, p. 95, are not found in the library.

24. How do living creatures out of doors respond to the influence of a June day?

25. In Lowell's thought, what is the influence to which every living thing in nature responds? Is it in the beauty of the day, or in something else?

26. What passage in the description of June do you like best? Why? What passage do you think most beautiful? Why?

27. What is the keynote, or artistic centre, of this description of June?

28. Show from lines 80–93 what influence the high tide of the year exerts on the human heart.

29. *a.* The last stanza of the prelude is tied to the first in a certain way; show how.

b. In another way, to the second stanza; explain this relation between the stanzas.

c. In still another, to the description of June; show in what the connection lies.

30. The last two lines of the prelude introduce a character and tell of something antecedent to the June when the story of Part First begins. Do these lines really belong in the prelude?

NOTE. — If these lines belong in the prelude, they must have some relation to its purpose, and connected steps in the plan must lead the mind to them as a conclusion.

31. In the Prelude to Part First as a whole, what was the main purpose of the poet?

32. Which is longer, the prelude, or the narrative of Part First which it introduces?

33. Is there any part of the prelude for which the main purpose of the introduction is not a sufficient excuse? Would any other reason serve? Express here simply your own feeling and opinion.

PART FIRST

34. What narrative elements for the story have been given in the Prelude?
35. Describe the appearance and character of Sir Launfal from the impression given by Lowell.
36. How much more than he tells in words does the author make you understand? How does he do this?
37. Describe Sir Launfal's life as you imagine it up to the beginning of the story?
38. In the Siege of Summer, lines 119–127:
    a. What is personified?
    b. What was the reason for the siege?
    c. In how many details is the picture of a siege carried out?
    d. For each detail what is the parallel between the literal thing and the meaning in the figure?
    e. Explain the use of the adjectives **churlish, chilly.**
    f. The **pavilions of summer tall, the tents, the murmur at night,** mean what literally?
39. In the story of Sir Launfal's quest, what is Lowell trying to make clear by this beautiful and extended figure?
40. What is the real beginning of the story of Part First?
41. Why did Sir Launfal sleep on the rushes the night before starting on his quest?
42. Find every plot element, or step, before the beginning of the dream.
43. In the beginning of the dream, what was the time of year?

    NOTE. — Lowell may have borrowed the suggestion of the dream from the belief in the time of the crusades that a vision was often sent to guide one consecrated to some holy quest.
44. Of what elements in the real story is the first part of the dream made up?
45. In the start what do you learn about Sir Launfal? Why did Lowell choose **surly** as the adjective for clang?
46. What was the real purpose of the knight's quest? What was the vow he had sworn? What particulars are contrasted in the narrative of the start? Why?
47. **Sir Launfal's first adventure.** Make a little plot outline for this incident showing:

a. The cause, or the beginning.
b. The most important moment.
c. The result and the end of the incident.

48. What is dwelt upon in the description of the leper?
49. In this little plot which is more important, the refusal of the gift, or the reason for it?

NOTE. — This must be shown by the influence of one or the other upon Sir Launfal. The moral force of the reason in itself is not an argument to the point.

50. How far on his quest has the knight gone when Part First closes?
51. At the close of Part First what part of the story remains untold? That is, what more do you care to hear about Sir Launfal's quest?

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND

52. Why did the author choose a winter scene for the Prelude to Part Second?
53. What is the keynote, or artistic centre, for this description?
54. In this prelude what is personified? What is the relation between the persons of the figure?
55. What is the purpose of the first seven lines?
56. In the description of the winter palace of ice the terms and figures are borrowed from architecture:
    a. Who is the builder? What material was used?
    b. Is the description of the palace from without, or from within? What difference does this make?

    NOTE. — In *An Indian-Summer Reverie*, p. 47, Lowell describes the river as protected from the onslaught of winter in another way; the material used, and the agent that builds, the frost, are the same, but the point of view of the description and the details are different. The student may compare.

57. In the description of the hall within the castle Lowell uses many figures of speech; one follows another very closely and sometimes the means of transition is no more than some habitual association in the mind.

    What is the reason that the mind passes easily from the per-

sonification of Christmas to the figure in the next two lines? Is sprouting a good adjective here? Show reasons for your opinion from the picture in your mind, etc.

58. In lines 215–224, how many times does the poet change his comparison, and thus suggest a new picture in the mind?
59. Which of these comparisons belong to the picture of the great fireplace and the blazing yule log?
60. For each of the following explain:
    a. What two things the poet compares.
    b. In what the similarity lies.
    c. Whether differences come to your mind in spite of yourself as you read? The numbers refer to the lines of the poem.

215. deep gulf.	220. hunted to death.
216. roaring tide.	220. galleries blind.
217. pennons droop.	221. troops of sparks.
219. a locust shrills.	223. soot-forest.

61. In the figure which the line Like herds of startled deer completes, carry out two descriptions, one of deer fleeing from the scent of the hunter on the wind, the other of the picture in the fireplace which it parallels, and point out every similarity you can find, and also anything in which the two pictures are very dissimilar.
62. There is one very unpleasant figure in this stanza; what is it? Why is it poor? Why did Lowell use it?
63. In the Prelude to Part Second, Lowell attempted to write a parallel to the Prelude to Part First in plan, arrangement, and relation to the story that follows, and at the same time to contrast the two preludes sharply in the details described and in the hidden meaning. Make in brief outline a parallel showing for each prelude:
    a. Time of year.
    b. Place of scene.
    c. Description of scene without the castle.
    d. Description of castle within.
    e. The meaning of the description in relation to the story.
64. In the first part of the narrative the castle was gloomy and churlish. Why this change in the description of it? Has

NOTE. — Definitions with illustrations will be found in the Century and unabridged dictionaries.

there been any change in its use? Is this change consistent with the allegorical meaning of the poem?

Prove by comparison and contrast; the two descriptions of Sir Launfal, the first and second incident of the leper, furnish material.

65. Does the description of winter, as you read, seem to belong in Sir Launfal's dream, or out of it? Which did Lowell intend?
66. Is there any hint in the descriptions of the Prelude to Part Second that they illustrate some special thought or meaning?
67. Do the descriptions, figures, etc., of the second prelude guide the reader to any starting point for the narrative of Part Second?
68. What is the purpose of this prelude?

PART SECOND

69. What is omitted between Part First and Part Second (*a*) in time; (*b*) in incidents; (*c*) in the experience of the knights; (*d*) in change of character.
70. Are any narrative elements essential to the story given in the Prelude to Part Second?
71. In what is the beginning of the story, or plot, of Part Second?
72. Contrast the opening scene with the first adventure of the knight in Part First in, (*a*) time; (*b*) place; (*c*) description of Sir Launfal; (*d*) plot element, or action.
73. **Sir Launfal mused as he sat.**
    a. What pictures are given?
    b. Why are these pictures introduced here just before the beggar addresses the knight?
74. **The incident of the leper.**
    Compare this incident with the former one in:
    a. The description of the leper.
    b. The description and situation of Sir Launfal.
    c. The gift; the reason for giving.
    d. The most important moment of the incident.
    e. The result and the conclusion.
75. How do you explain the difference in the outcome of these two incidents?

76. In the dream, in what was the beginning?
77. What is the most important moment, or climax of the dream?
78. What is the result or conclusion?
79. If the dream were not a dream but a story, could you find a title for it that would give a hint of its real meaning?

The waking of Sir Launfal.

80. How long a time had passed since the story began?
81. How long a time did the dream seem to cover?
82. What was the result of the dream in Sir Launfal's life?
83. In the whole story, where do you find the climax?
84. In what is the end of the story?
85. What is meant by **The Summer's long siege at last is o'er?**
86. Show by comparison whether Lowell continues and carries out the figure used in Part First here, or whether this line is no more than an allusion to carry the mind back to the conditions of an earlier time in the story.
87. Do you think of Sir Launfal at the end as an old man or as a young one? Which did Lowell intend? Support your opinion from the poem.

GENERAL TOPICS

I. What is the theme or real purpose of the poem, *The Vision of Sir Launfal?*

II. What ethical truth, or lesson, did Lowell intend to embody clearly and effectively in this poem?

III. In Part Second, what do you find that corresponds to and illustrates exactly the line in the Prelude to Part First, **We Sinais climb and know it not?**

IV. Lowell invented his plot. What did he borrow from old traditions and stories? Did he change the meaning of anything that he borrowed?

V. If Lowell thought of the Quest, and the Holy Grail as allegorical symbols which he might use to convey a spiritual meaning, explain for what each part stood in his mind at the time of the writing of the poem.

a. The castle in the North Countree.

b. The knight.

c. The object of the quest.

d. The leper.

e. The finding of the Grail.

VI. A poem is great when the special meaning in the mind of the author at the time of its composition includes also some wider truth or meaning which will always interpret common human experience, and inspire new love of beauty and of noble conduct. In this wider meaning, for what does the knight stand? The castle? The siege of summer?

VII. What definition of the true meaning, in all time, of the Grail is given?

VIII. What is the quest? What is the significance of the finding of the Grail?

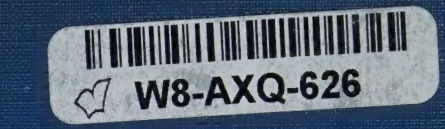
IX. What special belief of Lowell's do you find in this poem?

X. What evidence or illustration do you find of the characteristics of a poet as different from a philanthropist, or a writer of prose?

XI. Which passage in this poem do you think noblest? Why?

XII. Which passage do you like best? Why?

XIII. Which passage do you think most full of poetic beauty and meaning? Why?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